South Haven Tribune

$3

June 21, 2026

Photo provided / Tom Renner

South Haven's newly reinstated lifeguard program helped an individual in a lifesaving incident last week on South Beach.

SH mayor thanks lifeguards for saving husband's life

Brown on incident: Doctors say 'Jeff was lucky to be alive'

By JULIE NEWELL
SH Tribune Editor

SOUTH HAVEN — South Haven Mayor Annie Brown took a moment during this week's city council meeting to thank the newly reinstated lifeguards for their help in saving her husband's life at the beach.

It was reported a man was saved by South Haven lifeguards on June 9. On Monday, Brown made a public statement thanking the lifeguards for saving her husband, Jeff Filbrandt, after he collapsed from cardiac arrest at South Beach.

BROWN

"I want to thank everyone who was involved Tuesday in saving the life of my husband, Jeff Filbrandt," Brown said this week. "First I want to thank David Figeardo and his team of lifeguards who immediately performed CPR, and when that didn't work, they used the defibrillator to get Jeff's heart started."

Filbrandt had exited Lake Michigan and was speaking with an on-duty lifeguard when he became unresponsive and collapsed.

"I think my husband's last words to the lifeguard before he collapsed were, 'It looks like you're going to have a slow morning,'" Brown recalled.

During her statement, Brown also thanked South Haven Area Emergency Services and the South Haven Police Department for their assistance in the incident.

"From the moment I walked into the ER and almost every day, doctors and nurses told me that I should buy lottery tickets, because Jeff was lucky to be alive," Brown said. "In fact, one of his doctors said he was alive, specifically because trained and highly qualified lifeguards were there to immediately perform CPR and then shock him."

Contact: jnewell@southhaventribune.com, 269-637-1104

Grant application for park project approved

By JULIE NEWELL
SH Tribune Editor

SOUTH HAVEN — The South Haven City Council approved an application to U.S. Department of Agriculture rural business development grant for funding for the pocket park project.

SHOUT for South Haven proposed to the city a public space improvement project located in front of City Hall along Phoenix Street.

"We did do some preliminary work with Whiteman and Associates to see what that would look like; our cost pretty much ran up pretty quickly and what we have determined is this is a more in depth program than we initially thought," City Manager Kate Hosier said.

The proposed project would be community gathering space featuring a fountain, seating areas, a memorial wall and other public amenities.

"Because there's a lot of moving parts, including moving water, you've kind of had to do a little more engineering than you normally do," Hosier said.

If awarded, the grant could fund up to 90 percent of the engineering and design costs for the project and the remaining 10 percent would be a match from the city.

"We had looked at other options for funding and then Michael (Landis), working with Market One, identified a possible grant award that we could attempt where the city would only have to provide a match," Hosier said.

Landis said they are only seeking engineering and design fees to be covered by the grant, and the city contribution would be $9,965.88.

If successful in receiving the grant, Landis said they would look at other grant opportunities to fund the rest of the development project.

Budget

The council approved amendments to the 2025-26 budget during Monday's meeting.

The amendments were made to the general fund and the overall budget revenues and expenditures.

According to the report, the overall budgeted revenues show a net increase of $5,073,009 while the overall budgeted expenditures increased by $4,639,938.

"This includes adjustments for changes in personnel costs, unexpected repairs and maintenance items, increases in cost of supplies and services, and unplanned revenues and expenditures," the report stated.

The general Fund revenues had an increase of $933,584 and an increase in expenditures of $183,386.

"The general fund revenues

See **COUNCIL**, page A2

LMC students launch Grand Lac Cider

By TRIBUNE STAFF

BENTON HARBOR — Lake Michigan College's Wine and Viticulture Technology program is preparing students for the growing industry opportunity by adding hard cider production to the curriculum and as a result has recently announced the release of Grand Lac Cider.

According to a news release, Grand Lac Cider, named for Lake Michigan, honors the waters that have shaped Southwest Michigan agriculture for generations.

"The student-crafted cider celebrates the region's orchard heritage while showcasing the hands-on learning experiences that define the program," the release stated. "Hard cider production is an emerging industry in Michigan, with the state now standing as the second-largest producer of the craft beverage in the country."

According to the 2025 Economic Impact Study of the Michigan Craft Beverage Industry, more than 135 Michigan beverage makers craft hard cider, producing over 1.2 million gallons annually. Wineries and cideries in Southwest Michigan are instrumental in this growth, making the region one of the top in the state for production of the centuries-old beverage.

Photo provided

Lake Michigan College's Wine and Viticulture Technology program recently announced the release of Grand Lac Cider.

"We challenge students to move beyond theory and make real production decisions," Lake Michigan College Director of Wine and Viticulture Technology Tim Godfrey said in the release. "This project required students to think like beverage makers rather than simply following instructions. It mirrors the creative and analytical process used throughout the beverage industry while reminding students that there is rarely one correct path to creating something great."

The cider base began with fresh-pressed juice sourced through Michigan State University's Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center in Benton Harbor. The juice was created from a blend of experimental apple breeding selections grown in one of the center's research blocks, including numerous unnamed varieties.

"Partnerships like this connect agricultural research with education and industry," Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center Farm Manager Mike de Schaaf said in the release. "Seeing students work with apples from our experimental plantings creates a meaningful bridge between research and the next generation of beverage professionals."

Students applied fermentation principles to create a cider style of their own. They made independent decisions, choosing fermentation techniques intended to deliver specific sensory outcomes. Some used stainless steel fermentations to preserve bright apple character and freshness, while others aged cider in barrels to develop additional texture and complexity. Grand Lac ultimately became a blend of these approaches.

Students then traveled to Fenn Valley Vineyards in Fennville, Mich. where they worked alongside the winery team to learn about beverage canning while packaging the cider on the winery's canning line.

See **CIDER**, page A2

Two face narcotics, firearms charges

By TRIBUNE STAFF

HARTFORD — Two Hartford men are in custody following a raid and months-long narcotics trafficking investigation.

According to a news release, Southwest Enforcement Team detectives – along with the Michigan State Police Emergency Support Team, Paw Paw Post troopers, K-9 Unit and the Drug Enforcement Administration – executed a residential search warrant on June 11 at a residence on Marion Avenue in Hartford.

Investigators seized one long gun, five pistols, a pistol-to-rifle conversion kit and brass knuckles. One firearm had been reported stolen, and another was determined to be a privately manufactured "ghost gun" that lacked a serial number.

Police said they also seized about 26 grams of cocaine hydrochloride, digital scales, drug-packaging materials, and items commonly used in the manufacturing and distribution of controlled substances.

A 27-year-old Hartford man was arrested and lodged at the Van Buren County Jail on multiple felony charges, including receiving and concealing stolen property, possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony, and possession with intent to deliver cocaine.

A 62-year-old Hartford man was also arrested and lodged at the jail on multiple felony charges, including possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony, possession with intent to deliver cocaine, maintaining a drug house, and resisting and obstructing a police officer.

"SWET and its law enforcement partners remain committed to investigating and prosecuting narcotics trafficking to help ensure the safety and well-being of communities throughout Southwest Michigan," the release stated.

Residents are encouraged to report suspected drug activity by emailing MSP-PROTECT@michigan.gov or by leaving an anonymous message on the SWET tip line at 269-982-8664.

SWET is funded in part by the Michigan High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program and the U.S. Department of Justice Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program and is administered by the Michigan State Police.

Contact: twittkowski@TheHP.com, 932-0358.

The Tribune: Celebrating Our 127th Year

6 94653 00027 4

Support the Local Businesses Who Help Support Our Community!

COUNCIL

From page A1

increased partly due to the new short-term rental zoning compliance determination fees amended budget of $138,413," the report stated.

Interest earned on investments budget increased $525,000.

The expenditures increased due to increases in legal counsel costs and an increase in the South Haven Area Emergency Services fire contribution.

Total amended budget revenues are $59,423,826 and the total amended expenditures are $60,469,801.

Other items

The council approved three special events including:

■ Elkenburg Park Summer Recreation Program, to be held from noon to 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday, in Elkenburg Park starting July 6 and ending Aug. 21.

■ Messy Art Day 2026 to be held from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on July 24 at the Huron Street Pavilion.

■ South Haven Dinghy Poker Run 2026 to be held from 3 to 10 p.m. on July 18 in the Huron Street Pavilion.

The council approved an amendment to the development agreement with Lakefront Roofing and Exteriors LLC.

"My understanding is there's been some delays and some unexpected costs with that which is causing them to ask for a 12-month extension," Hosier said.

Lakefront purchased land at 1875 Dow Lane and got a site plan approved for a showroom and outdoor storage yard area, but have encountered delays in the development process.

Some of the delays are due to the continued business growth and the company not having the time to work on the development project.

The council set a public hearing for the New Park Gastro Pub social district application to take place at 7 p.m. on July 6 during the regular council meeting.

Contact: jnewell@southhaventribune.com, 269-637-1104

CIDER

From page A1

"The beverage industry benefits when we create opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience," Fenn Valley Vineyards Winemaker Matt Jannette said in the release. "We were happy to stir on Grand Lac and give students a chance to experience canning and production in a commercial setting."

Grand Lac Cider is available to enjoy onsite or for to-go purchase at the Lake Michigan Vintners tasting room on Lake Michigan College's Benton Harbor campus. The tasting room is located at 2744 E. Empire Ave. Its hours are from noon to 6 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

Guests can also explore new beverage experiences offered this summer, including barrel tastings, wine and cheese pairings and educational guided tastings with college staff and educators.

More information and reservations are available at www.lakemichigan vintners.com.

For more information about the Lake Michigan College Viticulture program, go to www.lakemichigancollege.edu/academics/culinary-wine viticulture/wine-and-viticulture.

Photo provided

Grand Lac Cider, named for Lake Michigan, is a Lake Michigan College student-crafted cider with a base of fresh-pressed blend of experimental apple breeding selections.

OBITUARIES

Lori Lipari

Sept. 12, 1955 –May 20, 2026

Lori Marleah Lipari of Bangor, Mich., died at home on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, surrounded by her family after a six-month battle with cancer. Lori was born on Sept. 12, 1955, in Easton, Pa. to Betty Lyon Lipari and Rock Lipari.

She spent her early years in Pennsylvania and California, before moving to Portage, Mich. on Gourdneck Lake. After graduating from Portage Central High School, Lori moved to Columbia to attend the University of South Carolina, where she met her husband, Chuck Jordan at a bar called Almost Nuts. They celebrated 45 years of marriage on Jan. 30, 2026.

Lori was an ICU nurse at Columbia Baptist Hospital before moving to Bangor, Mich. in 1989 with her husband and three children, with two more children born at home later. She was a nurse supervisor at South Haven Community Hospital for 20 years.

At the age of 55, Lori earned her Nurse Practitioner degree from the Frontier School of Midwifery and Family Nursing, practicing in family clinics and at Vitality Home Health Services for eight years before moving on to full-time grandma.

Lori lived a full life with adventure, humor and deep love for her family and friends. She cherished attending countless sporting events and band performances for her children, grandchildren and foreign exchange grandchildren. She was proud of all their educational accomplishments, especially her grandson's high school graduation this May.

Lori loved spending time with her nurse friends, listening to local live music, riding her e-bike to count turtles along the Paw Paw River, playing Bridge at the Kalamazoo Bridge Club, sharing laughs with her Encore Club friends and learning to make pottery at Khnemu Studio.

Lori also traveled to Spain, Japan, Hawaii, Turkey and she especially loved Crete. Lori enjoyed reading, sailing and playing backgammon, sequence and many other board games with her children and grandchildren.

Surrounded by a large and loving family, Lori especially felt that love during the last six months of her life. She was deeply grateful for the many phone calls, visits and thoughtful cards from dear friends, both lifelong companions and treasured newer friendships. Lori devoted her life to caring for others as a nurse, nurse practitioner, and mother and her legacy of compassion, kindness and love will continue through all who knew and loved her.

Lori was preceded in death by her parents, Betty and Rock Lipari, as well as many aunts and uncles.

She is survived by her loving husband, Chuck Jordan, who cared for her dutifully during her illness and before; her children Aly (John) Lipari of Schoolcraft, Jeffrey Lipari-Jordan of Hancock, Kira (Franz) Griggs of Portage, Wyatt (Alannah) Lipari-Jordan of Parchment, and Patrick (Sureau) Lipari-Jordan of Portage; her beloved grandchildren Colin (Grace), Amelia, and Blake Sager, Andrew Lucas, Le and Flora Griggs; her other favorite person in the world, her brother, Stephen (Megumi) Haynes of Honolulu, Hawaii; and her favorite pet, Spidercat.

Lori will be cremated at Adams Funeral Home in Paw Paw, Mich. A small celebration of life with her immediate family and close friends will be held at a later date.

Thank you to the Bronson oncology team led by Anna Hoekstra and the Centrica Hospice Care for their compassionate care during Lori's illness.

In lieu of flowers, friends may make donations to Frontier Nursing University 2050 Lexington Road, Versailles, KY 40383, The West Michigan Cancer Center, 200 N. Park Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007, an educational organization, or a charity of your choice.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at adamspawpaw.com.

Rosemary 'Rosie' Adams Thurber

Oct. 7, 1931 – June 8, 2026

Rosemary "Rosie" Adams Thurber, 94, ever in search of a peaceable kingdom, died in the company of her loving family at Laurel Oaks of South Haven, Mich., on June 8, 2026.

She was a lifelong advocate for the common good of creatures great and small. Rosie was born in New York City on Oct. 7, 1931, to James Grover Thurber and Althea Adams Thurber. She grew up in Sandy Hook, Conn., and Cambridge and Amherst, Mass., graduating from the Northampton School for Girls in 1949 and from the University of Pennsylvania in 1953 with a liberal arts degree.

At age 17 she dreamed of being an actor, and it was as a member of the Pennsylvania Players college theater group that she met her future husband, Frederick W. Sauers. They married in Philadelphia and settled in Chicagoland, raised three children and were married for 20 years.

Rosie was active onstage at the Theatre of Western Springs and co-founded a theater troupe that performed for children. She returned to school in her 40s, earned a master's degree in social work at Washington University in St. Louis, then moved to South Haven to live alongside her treasured Lake Michigan.

Rosie worked in support of peace, social justice, the environment and the arts, often through her associations with the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany and the South Haven Center for the Arts, where she was board president and for years shepherded the July South Haven Art Fair.

She was a longtime member of the church, served on the vestry and found a great source of strength and wisdom in God's way and through healing prayer. Rosie loved visits from her family, partying with friends, her evening Manhattan, good conversation, and making her point – you wanted her on your side.

As the only child of a celebrated writer and cartoonist, Rosie found her life touched in exceptional ways. Working with publishers, authors, performers and literary organizations, she guided her father's literary estate and legacy as a humorist with care and a keen editorial sense.

She was a supporting founder of the Thurber House literary center and museum in Columbus, Ohio. Her father dedicated The Last Flower to her in 1939, writing, "For Rosemary, in the wistful hope that her world will be better than mine." She will now hold that hope for all of us.

Rosie's survivors include her children, Sara Thurber Sauers (Mike Lewis-Beck) and Greg Thurber Sauers (Mary); her grandchildren, Adam G. Sauers (Olivia Dellios) and Elizabeth A. Valtman (Chris); two great-grandchildren, Adeline and Zoey Valtman; her sister, Linda A. Gilmore; and a nephew and niece, Tim and Zoë Fothergill.

She was preceded in death by her son Mark Thurber Sauers; her parents; her stepmother, Helen W. Thurber; and her fondly remembered childhood stepfather, Francis B. Comstock.

A celebration of life is planned for the early fall. Memorial donations may be made to the Church of the Epiphany, Al-Van Humane Society, or the South Haven Center for the Arts.

To those who choose to leave a memory or condolence please visit www.starksfamilyfh.com.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Filbrandt Chapel-Starks Family Funeral Homes and Cremation Services. 269-637-0333.

If your business is interested in being featured in this space monthly, contact us at 269-429-2400 ext 402.

We Fetch You More
Print and Digital Solutions for our Advertisers

Get FREE e-edition access
southhaventribune.com

Our e-edition gives you full online access to all of the valuable features included in our print edition.

Nobody delivers a more engaged audience than we do. Our growth online, combined with print, is impressive as more readers turn to us for local news.

Contact the advertising account executive for your marketing solution, freid@thehp.com

South Haven Tribune

Local service you can trust.
2025 Best of South Haven WINNER South Haven Tribune

HARDT INSURANCE
SINCE 1906

2021, 2022, 2024 Best of South Haven WINNER South Haven Tribune

(269) 637-1181 • hardtinsurance.com
Auto • Home • Business • Farm

Park Meadows APARTMENTS

11225 Park Meadows Drive
South Haven, Michigan 49090

Stacy Niles, Resident Manager
Professionally Managed by Medallion Management, Inc.

Equal Housing Opportunity
TTY 7-1-1
269.639.PARK • FX:269.639.8097
www.medallionmgmt.com

Happy Father's Day

South Haven Art Fair returns

By TRIBUNE STAFF

SOUTH HAVEN — The South Haven Center for the Arts will present the 67 th Annual South Haven Art Fair over the holiday weekend on July 4 and 5 at Stanley Johnston Park.

According to a news release the event is free-to-attend will host 100 artists, with the inclusion of a variety of artforms displayed and featured for sale; ranging from painting and photography to ceramics and jewelry.

"The SHCA welcomes individual and family attendance to this event with numerous activities, artists and vendors featured for you to enjoy," the release stated.

Artists from across the U.S., within and beyond the midwest, as well as local Michigan creatives, will be featured at the art fair.

These artists include: North Carolina-based artist, Kenneth Keifer, featuring his scenic photography; Indiana artist Doug Schmidt, with his contemporary stoneware works; and local Southwest Michigan artist, Diana Kamps, with mixed-media book page designs, among others from various locations with many mediums represented.

New artists featured in this year's art fair include: South Haven local artist Sabrina Pringle, who will be showcasing and selling her varied pencil, pen and watercolor works; as well as Stacy Cook of Ohio who is a pottery artist creating planters and vases.

A family art tent will be presented by the art center to offer visitors interactive art experiences.

"This hands-on activity booth will allow the creative expression of all who participate, especially encouraging youth engagement," the release stated.

Additional interactive opportunities also include a new print-making tent hosted by the art center, which will be open to all to participate in and create their own designs through this ink and stamp-based medium.

Each year the art fair is judged by professional artists for the consideration of $1,500 in awards to be presented to these featured artists.

Indiana artist Brooke Garber is a returning award winner who creates wood-based works.

"Beautiful, shaded Stanley Johnston Park is a wonderful place to spend a July weekend in South Haven viewing and creating art, talking to artists and eating an assortment of festival treats from our food vendors," Executive Director Kerry Hagy said in the release.

This year's event will feature 10 food vendors, including a "dirty soda" vendor, "Sweet Stacks + Soda Locas," which offers the sale of these sweet treats.

"This event substantially supports the South Haven Center for the Arts and its organizational mission of enriching the South Haven area through the visual arts," the release stated. "This event is supported by numerous community volunteers and generous sponsors including Visit South Haven and Hardt Insurance.

For more information contact the South Haven Center for the Arts at 269-637-1041 or via email at info@southhavenartfair.org.

For art fair updates, visit the center's Facebook page.

Photo provided

Madeline Finn, an art educator, is selling student artwork designs created by South Haven High School students at the 2025 South Haven Art Fair.

New dementia-friendly movie event at SH theater

By TRIBUNE STAFF

SOUTH HAVEN — Area Agency on Aging and the Campus for Creative Aging, in partnership with the Michigan Theater in South Haven, are launching a new monthly event Dementia-Friendly Movies.

According to a news release, Dementia-Friendly Movies will take place at 11:30 a.m. on the second Wednesday of every month at the Michigan Theatre, 210 Center St., South Haven.

The event is designed for people experiencing cognitive changes, such as dementia or Alzheimer's, along with their caregivers, friends and family – and anyone else who wants to join.

"Attendees will experience a nostalgic movie in a welcoming and supportive environment – with the lights up, sound lowered and the space to sing, dance and clap along," Campus for Creative Aging Coordinator Jess Kolbe said in the release. "Creating opportunities like this is key to our mission of inspiring a more dementia-inclusive Southwest Michigan."

Upcoming movies include:

■ July 8: "Grease."

■ Aug. 12: "Hairspray."

■ Sept. 9: "Sleepless in Seattle."

Admission is free. Tickets will be available at the door and can also be used for door prize entries. Donations are welcome.

Concessions are available for $4, which includes a small drink and small popcorn. Registration is encouraged in case of an unexpected cancelation.

Volunteers are also needed to support this event, assisting with greeting guests, concessions, ticketing and other roles before, during and after each movie.

Those interested in volunteering can go to areaagencyonaging.org/volunteer-opportunities or call 269-932-7865.

For more information, to volunteer, or sign up for a movie, go to areaagencyonaging.org/dementia-friendly-movies.

Dementia-Friendly Movies are made possible through the support of Moore Theaters and the South Haven Area Community Foundation.

Photo provided

The South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce recently celebrated Landscape Design Services, Inc.'s new South Haven location with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Landscape Design Services expands

By TRIBUNE STAFF

SOUTH HAVEN — The South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce recently celebrated the opening of member Landscape Design Services, Inc.'s new South Haven location with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

According to a news release, for 58 years, the family-owned company and its team have served communities throughout West Michigan.

"Landscape Design Services is dedicated to making clients' lives easier and better through professional landscape maintenance and construction services," the release stated.

For decades, Landscape Design Services has traveled from its Holland headquarters to serve customers in the South Haven area.

"We are extremely excited to solidify that connection with our new location and to serve South Haven from South Haven," President and Senior Landscape Architect Matthew Bakker said in the release.

Landscape Design Services joined the chamber in 2008 as a way to deepen community involvement and strengthen local connections.

"The chamber congratulates Landscape Design Services on this exciting expansion and looks forward to its continued growth and impact in the South Haven area," the release stated.

SH chamber hosts annual dinner

By TRIBUNE STAFF

SOUTH HAVEN — The South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce recently hosted its 2026 Annual Celebration Dinner and Business Excellence Awards, bringing together 250 Chamber members for an evening of recognition and celebration of the community.

According to a news release, the event was held at the South Haven Moose Lodge Family Center.

The event marked the chamber's 94th year of serving the business community and highlighted the outstanding contributions of local businesses, nonprofits and community leaders in 2025.

"This evening is about celebrating the people, businesses and organizations that go above and beyond to strengthen our community," Executive Director Brandy Key said in the release. "Their dedication, innovation and generosity help make the South Haven area a place where businesses thrive and neighbors support one another."

The 2025 Business Excellence Award winners included:

■ Give Back Program Recipient: Hideaway Salon & Spa

■ Established Business of the Year: Paceline Auto Group, LLC.

■ Innovative Business of the Year: Bend Yoga, LLC.

■ New Business of the Year: Haven Market

■ Manufacturer of the Year: W.R. Grace

■ Non-Profit Organization of the Year: South Haven Festival of Cars/ Kruisin' for Kylie

■ Community Impact Award: Katie Parrish (Junebugs)

■ Lifetime Achievement Award: Tom Renner

"The chamber extends sincere gratitude to all attendees, sponsors and volunteers who made the celebration possible," the release stated.

For more information about the South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce and upcoming events, go to www.southhavenchamber.com.

New luxury residential development underway in South Hsaven

By TRIBUNE STAFF

SOUTH HAVEN — The Drifts of SoHa officially broke ground on a new luxury residential and recreational storage development on Thursday.

According to a news release, the gated community is located across from Autumn Design on 73 1/2 Street in South Haven Township and introduces a unique "live above your lifestyle" concept.

The project features 45 loft units, each offering 1,500 square feet of upscale living space built directly above a 1,500-square-foot garage – which can be used for storing boats, RVs and classic cars or as a workshop.

Buyers can choose from two- and three-bedroom layouts, with options for larger configurations and private elevators.

The neighborhood will also have community amenities, including: a swimming pool, pickleball and basketball courts, walking trails and preserved conservation areas.

"This community bridges the gap between luxury living and the storage flexibility that Southwest Michigan residents and seasonal homeowners need," the release stated.

Construction is set to begin this summer.

South Haven Tribune CLASSIFIEDS

Classified Desk: 1-855-317-4292

Hours: Monday - Friday 9am-2pm EST

0100 ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE BUY JUNK CARS!
DAMAGED? TOTALED?
BROKEN? NOT RUNNING?
WRECKED?

CALL 269-500-1711

0200 EMPLOYMENT

The City of South Haven is seeking a **Technical Support Administrator** to provide help desk support and assist with maintaining municipal IT systems, networks, and servers. Associate's degree in IT, Computer Science, or related field required (Bachelor's preferred), with 1–3 years of relevant experience. Municipal or enterprise IT experience preferred.
Candidates may apply online at www.southhavenmi.gov. The City of South Haven is an Equal Opportunity Employer who places a high value on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

0500 MERCHANDISE

WE BUY
RIDING & COMMERCIAL MOWERS, TRACTORS, ATVS, GOLF CARTS, SCOOTERS, 4X4S, VEHICLES & ALL LAWN EQUIPMENT.

269-500-1711

0500 MERCHANDISE

MOTORCYCLES & SNOWMOBILES WANTED
$$ CASH PAID $$
ALL MAKES AND MODELS

269-500-1711

0900 LEGALS

Meeting Synopsis
Casco Township Board Meeting
Monday, June 15th, 7:00 PM
CALL TO ORDER: Overhiser called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
PRESENT: Overhiser, Ridley, Fleming, & Campbell
ABSENT: Clevenger
ITEMS APPROVED:
-Minutes from 5/18/26
-Recommendation of "Pack in, Pack out" to the Casco Parks Committee
-Edgewater Proposal for additional grant funding
-STR Inspection agreement with SHAES
-Security updates at Casco Township Hall
ADJOURNMENT: 7:59 PM
Allan Overhiser, Casco Supervisor
Rachel Ridley, Casco Clerk

CITY OF SOUTH HAVEN Proceedings of the Regular City Council Meeting Council Chambers, City Hall 7:00 p.m. June 15, 2026

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Present: Jeff Arnold, Tom Capps, Dave Flack, Mary Hosley, Eddie Polk, Letitia Wilkins, Annie Brown

Absent: None

Call to Order by Mayor Annie Brown at 7:00 p.m.

Moved by Capps to approve the agenda. Seconded by Flack. Motion was adopted unanimously.

Police Department awards were given by Police Chief Adam DeBoer. Professional Excellence Awards were presented to Detective Michael Knizewski and Officer Drexal Haner. Life Saving Awards were presented to lifeguards; Camden Patmos, Marcus Trinidad, and Ryker Diekema.

Public Comment excluding items scheduled for public hearing was held.

Motion by Flack, seconded by Capps, to approve Consent Agenda Items A-H. Items A and B removed from Consent Agenda by Member Hosley. Item C removed from Consent Agenda by Member Capps. Amended motion by Flack, seconded by Capps, to approve Consent Agenda Items D-H. Roll Call Vote: Yes: Capps, Flack, Hosley, Polk, Wilkins, Arnold, Brown. No: None. Motion adopted.

Motion by Hosley, seconded by Wilkens, to amend the spelling of Carole Hodgman's name in the June 1, 2026 regular City Council minutes. Roll Call Vote: Yes: Hosley, Wilkins No: Flack, Polk, Arnold, Capps, Brown. Motion failed.

Motion by Flack, seconded by Polk, to approve item A, June 1, 2026, meeting minutes as presented. Roll Call Vote: Yes: Polk, Wilkins, Arnold, Capps, Flack, Brown. No: Hosley. Motion carried.

Motion by Hosley, seconded by Flack, to approve Item B, invoices totaling $2,145,879.08 for the period ending June 15, 2026. Roll Call Vote: Yes: Polk, Wilkins, Arnold, Capps, Flack, Hosley, Brown. No: None. Motion carried.

A Roll Call Vote was taken to approve Item C, a revised quote for ADA beach walkway sections from Michigan Lake Products. Yes: Wilkins, Arnold, Flack, Hosley, Brown. No: Capps, Polk. Motion carried.

Motion by Flack, to approve a budget amendment for the Fiscal Year 2025-26 and authorize the Finance Director to amend the Budget as stated within the report. Seconded by Capps. Roll Call Vote: Yes: Arnold, Capps, Flack, Hosley, Polk, Wilkins, Brown. No: None. Motion adopted.

Moved by Hosley to approve Special Event Applications 2026-19 Elkenburg Park Summer Recreation Program, 2026-20 Messy Art Day 2026, & 2026-21 South Haven Dinghy Poker Run 2026. Seconded by Flack. Motion was adopted unanimously.

Motion by Hosley, to adopt Resolution 2026-23, A RESOLUTION APPROVING A FIRST AMENDMENT TO DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH LAKEFRONT ROOFING & EXTERIORS LLC. Seconded by Arnold. Roll Call Vote: Yes: Capps, Flack, Hosley, Polk, Wilkins, Arnold, Brown. No: None. Motion adopted.

A roll call vote was taken to approve Resolution 2026-24, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR USDA RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANT (RBDG) FUNDING FOR THE POCKET PARK PROJECT AND DESIGNATING AN AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE. Roll Call Vote: Yes: Flack, Hosley, Polk, Wilkins, Arnold, Capps, Brown. No: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Arnold, to approve Resolution 2026-25, A RESOLUTION SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE NEW PARK GASTRO PUB SOCIAL DISTRICT APPLICATION. Seconded by Flack. Roll Call Vote: Yes: Hosley, Polk, Wilkins, Arnold, Capps, Flack, Brown. No: None. Motion adopted.

Police Chief Adam DeBoer gave an update regarding the Police Department Trainings, Dispatch Stats, Lifeguard stats, and community events attended by officers.

City Manager Kate Hosier shared comments.

Mayor and Councilpersons shared thoughts and comments.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Brittany Abrams, City Clerk

SOUTH HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP SYNOPSIS
REGULAR MEETING JUNE 10, 2026
PRESENT: Poole, Wiatrowski, Fisher, Lewandowski, Bertorelli, Stein, and DeGrandchamp
Motion to approve May 13, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes.
Chief Adam DeBoer of SHPD gave a report. **Gail Gladney** gave a report for VBCounty Commission. **Resident Kristen Parker** reported blight in her neighborhood on 72nd Street. Supervisor Stein noted that it was already noticed and being dealt with.
Motion to approve the Agenda with the addition of New Business 8.A.
Kallie Marshall from Van Buren Conservation was in attendance to update the board and announce the start of the Foam Collection program.
Motion to approve a bid to install new blinds in the meeting room.
Reports were received. W.C.Askew from the Road Commission was in attendance as was Sandy Starland from the Library.
Motion to approve payment of bills in the amount of $175,644.13.
Meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Brenda Bertorelli, Clerk

CASCO TOWNSHIP, ALLEGAN COUNTY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Zoning Board of Appeals of Casco Township will conduct a public hearing and regular meeting on Thursday July 9, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Casco Township Hall, 7104 107th Ave, South Haven, MI 49090, within the Township.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the item to be considered at said public hearing include the following:

Gustavo and Wendy Corona have petitioned for variances to construct a new home at 7248 Miami Ave 0302-553-001-00. 1. Required front setback Michigan Ave (not improved) 25ft; request is for 15ft of relief (to be 10ft from property line). 2. Required front setback Miami Ave 25ft; request is for 15ft of relief (to be 10ft from property line). 3. Required lot coverage 25%, request 1% of relief (to be 26%).

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the application packet can be reviewed at the Casco Township Hall during regular business hours at 7104 107th Ave, South Haven or by contacting the Zoning Administrator for an electronic copy 1-800-626-5964 mtsallegan@frontier.com

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that written comments may be submitted to the Township Clerk at the Township Hall, by mail, to address below, or email to the zoning administrator mtsallegan@frontier.com. All written comments must be submitted no later than 5:00pm the day preceding the public hearing (Wed July 8, 5pm).

Casco Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to individuals with disabilities at the hearing upon seven (7) days' notice to the Casco Township Clerk.

Rachel Ridley
Casco Township Clerk
7104 107th Ave, South Haven MI 49090
269-637-4441

Tasha Smalley
Zoning Administrator
1-800-626-5964

CITY OF SOUTH HAVEN
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
PLANNING COMMISSION

On Thursday, July 9, 2026, the Planning Commission for the City of South Haven will hear public comments related to the following request(s). The public hearing(s) will be held at 7:00 P.M. at City Hall, 539 Phoenix Street, South Haven concerning the following:

1. Special Land Use Application – 220 Elkenburg St

Daniel and Jessica Caswell have submitted a special land use application to use the dwelling unit located at 220 Elkenburg St in the City of South Haven as a short-term rental. The parcel number for the referenced address is 80-53-245-006-00.

2. Special Land Use Application – 225 N Shore Dr, #209

The Kathy Scofield Smith Trust has submitted a special land use application to use the dwelling unit located at 225 N Shore Dr, # 209 in the City of South Haven as a short-term rental. The parcel number for the referenced address is 80-53-726-066-00.

3. Special Land Use Application – 79 Park Ave

Stacy Dupree has submitted a special land use application to use the dwelling unit located at 79 Park Ave in the City of South Haven as a short-term rental. The parcel number for the referenced address is 80-53-743-016-00.

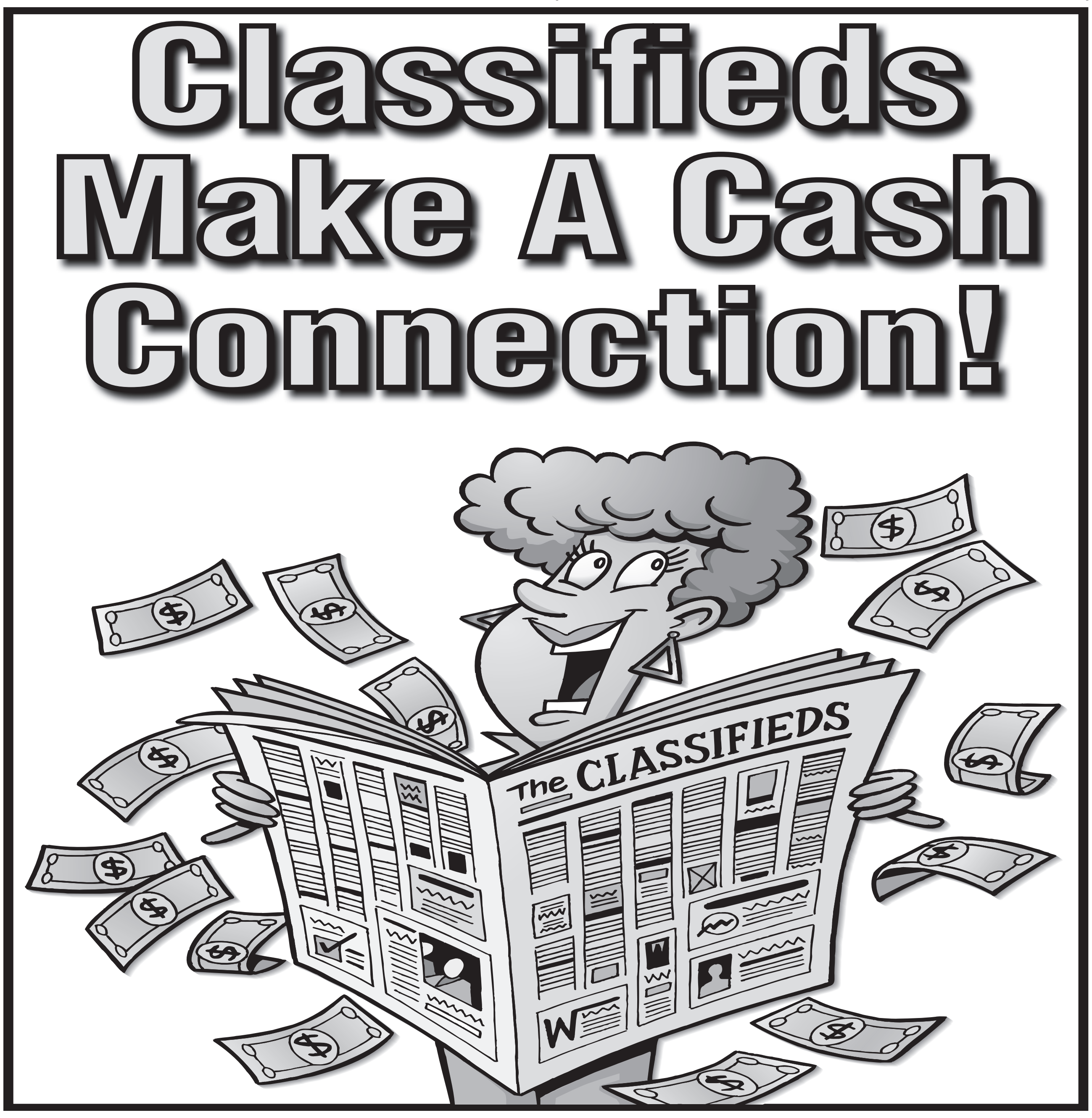
4. Planned Unit Development Application – 419 Phoenix St

Cottage Home has submitted a planned unit development rezoning application for the property located at 419 Phoenix St in the City of South Haven. The proposed development would include first floor commercial space, twelve hotel rooms on the second and third floors, and a rooftop meeting space. The parcel number for the referenced address is 80-53-123-011-00.

Supporting documentation is available for review at the Building Services office, 539 Phoenix Street, South Haven, MI 49090, during normal business hours. Written comments may be submitted in lieu of or in addition to a personal appearance. Written comments must be received no later than 12 p.m. (noon) on Thursday, July 9, 2026. Written comments should be addressed to the Planning Commission and must be submitted to the Zoning Administrator at kdissette@southhavenmi.gov or via postal mail addressed to the Planning Commission and sent to 539 Phoenix Street, South Haven, MI 49090.

Individuals requesting reasonable accommodation for impairments or disabilities should contact the City Clerk no later than five days prior to the public hearing in person at City Hall, at 269-637-0750, or at babrams@southhavenmi.gov.

Kelly Getman-Dissette
Zoning Administrator
(269) 637-0760
kdissette@southhavenmi.gov



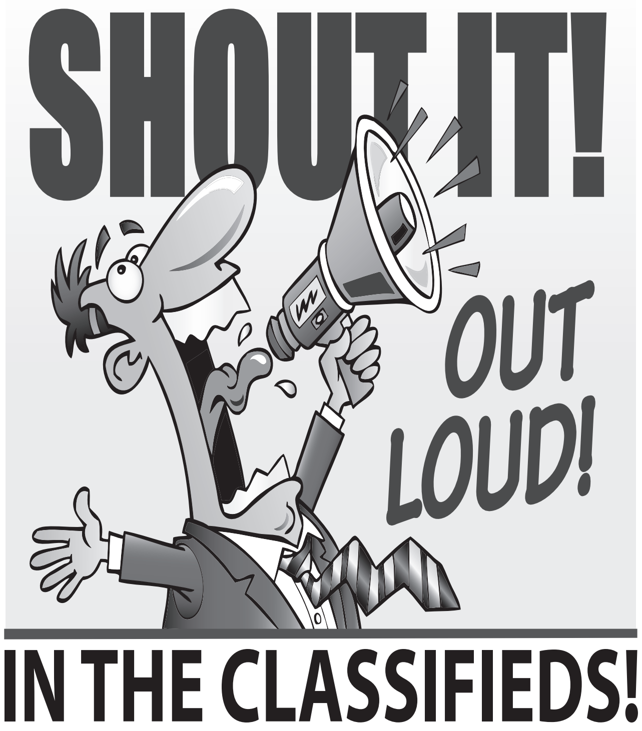


Photo provided

The South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce recently welcomed U-Haul Moving and Storage as a new member with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

U-Haul opens new facility in South Haven

By TRIBUNE STAFF

SOUTH HAVEN — The South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce recently welcomed U-Haul Moving and Storage of South Haven as a new chamber member.

According to a news release, the chamber held a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the opening of the new facility at 72710 Light House Boulevard.

The new U-Haul facility expands moving, storage and transportation services available to residents and businesses throughout the South Haven area.

Located near Phoenix Street, the facility offers a wide range of services, including: moving truck rentals, trailers and towing equipment, self-storage units, U-Box portable moving and storage containers, moving supplies, trailer hitch installation and truck sales.

"Designed to support both local and long-distance moves, the facility provides customers with access to a variety of rental options and storage solutions to meet residential and commercial needs," the release stated.

The self-storage center features climate-controlled units, indoor storage options, electronic access controls, video monitoring and a variety of unit sizes.

In addition to its moving and storage services, the location offers moving supplies, towing equipment, trailer rentals and U-Box containers that can be used for moving, storage and shipping needs.

"The South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to welcome U-Haul Moving and Storage of South Haven to its membership and recognizes the investment the company has made in expanding services and resources available to the local community," the release stated.

For more information about U-Haul Moving and Storage of South Haven, go to uhaul.com.

South Haven Cottage Walk to feature historic cottage tours

By TRIBUNE STAFF

SOUTH HAVEN — The 29th Annual Cottage Walk will feature tours of four unique cottages and the historic Scott Club.

According to a news release, the event, hosted by SHOUT for South Haven and the South Haven Scott Club, will take place from noon to 5 p.m. on June 27.

Event attendees can visit the cottages at their leisure while volunteers at each cottage will provide a historical perspective of the site. Tours of the Scott Club will run from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

The first stop on the tour is the three-story "Indiana School: Reimagined." The building will showcase the recent renovations which includes the third floor modern residence, featuring the Explorer's Room; a "secret" library hidden behind a 19th century facade.

"The library serves as the home's crowning jewel, housing artifacts and family treasures and bridging the school's academic past with a modern spirit of adventure," the release stated. "A professional dance studio has been adapted seamlessly into a guest suite. Many of the charming art pieces are 1890s reproductions."

Transom windows in the 13-foot-high rooms help keep the climate comfortable by taking advantage of the Lake Michigan breezes. A ladder leads to the surprise loft and at one time there was a bell in the tower that was rung by the third graders.

The next stop is a cottage designed by a Chicago antique dealer with an Italianate-style villa on a 17-acre estate.

The meticulous construction of the 19th century design features a hipped, low-pitch roof, wide overhanging eaves and tall narrow windows with decorative hood mould that make it feel as if you have stepped into the Italian countryside," the release stated. "High ceilings throughout highlight the breathtaking fine art collection and antique furnishings."

The classic decor is arranged to complement the architecture. Period lighting introduces rare fixtures throughout. A serene screened-in porch extends the living space to the outdoors, overlooking European-style formal gardens.

The third stop on the cottage walk is a stately manor that began as a 3,000 sq. ft. modular home built in an Indiana factory in just one week. The home was delivered to the current site in four sections. The builders set it up in three hours and it took another six weeks to finish the interior; adding porches, a breezeway and garages.

"With the finished lower level, the cheerful home grew to a spacious 5,000 square feet," the release stated. "Features include an open concept, unusual in the early 2000s, with four bedrooms, three and a half baths, three fireplaces, home offices, a recreation room and a home theater. The living space carries outdoors to the two porches and multi-level deck overlooking the peaceful, landscaped one acre lot, where wildlife abounds."

The final cottage is a new construction nestled on the prime, wooded Wood Crest community.

"Thoughtfully designed by Cottage Home with soaring, high ceilings, the traditional 3,576 square feet, four-bedroom, 3 1/2 bath residence blends timeless elegance with warm, cozy details throughout," the release stated.

The open-concept gourmet kitchen with a dining area and walk-in butler's pantry, creates both beauty and function for everyday living and entertaining.

"At the heart of the modern lifestyle home, a sprawling all-seasons room offers a spacious dining room, warm stone fireplace, and wooded views from every angle – seamlessly connecting indoor comfort to the beautiful pool area beyond," the release stated.

Tickets are $20 per person. The advanced purchase of tickets is encouraged as capacity sale is anticipated.

Tickets are on sale during normal business house through June 26 at the South Haven Chamber of Commerce, located at 606 Phillips St., and the South Haven Visitors Bureau, located at 546 Phoenix St.

Tickets will also be sold on the morning of the Cottage Walk at the Farmers Market in downtown Dyckman Park.

Lincoln Trio to perform

By TRIBUNE STAFF

SOUTH HAVEN — Continuing a tradition of presenting classical chamber music, the South Haven Performance Series will continue its 2026 Series with a concert by the award-winning Lincoln Trio on June 26.

According to a news release, the concert will begin at 7 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 429 Michigan Avenue in South Haven.

"Our Performance Series is privileged to welcome an exceptional ensemble, the Lincoln Trio, to perform the second concert in our 2026 season," South Haven Performance Series President Robert Linstrom said in the release. "The Lincoln Trio is comprised of three remarkable musicians performing on the piano, violin and cello, a concert that will include works by Beethoven and Brahms along with works by 20th century composers Paul Schoenfield and Stacy Garrup.

Nominated for a 2017 Grammy Award for Best Performance by a Small Ensemble and a 2024 Latin Grammy and winners of the 2008 Masterplayers International Competition in Venice, the Lincoln Trio has become one of Chicago's most celebrated chamber ensembles.

The trio takes its name from their home in the heartland of the USA: the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln.

"The Trio's polished presentations of well-known chamber works and their ability to forge new paths with contemporary repertoire have led to their reputation as a first-rate ensemble, drawing an eclectic audience of sophisticated music lovers, young admirers of contemporary programs and students who are discovering chamber music for the first time," the release stated.

Each member is an artist of international renown. Violinist Desirée Ruhstrat has performed throughout the U.S. and Europe, appearing at the White House and performing on a live radio broadcast heard around the world with the Berlin Radio Orchestra.

Cellist Ben Solomonow has appeared at the Marlboro Music Festival, Ojai Music Festival, Ravinia Music Festival, Festival Mozaic, North Shore Chamber Music Festival, Red Rocks Chamber Music Festival and with the Chicago Chamber Musicians.

Pianist Marta Aznavoorian has appeared with the Boston Pops and Chicago Symphony and has performed at the Kennedy Center and the Sydney Opera House.

Formed in 2003, the trio has performed throughout the U.S., including: the Ravinia Music Festival, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's Beethoven Chamber Music Series, the Lane Series at the University of Vermont, Columbus Chamber Music series and a tour on behalf of the Ravinia Festival celebrating the Lincoln Bicentennial, including a kickoff celebration in Springfield, Ill. with President Obama.

In Chicago, they are frequent guests of classical radio station WFMT and have been featured on Arts Across Illinois TV. They toured Singapore, Hong Kong and Vietnam on behalf of the Ravinia Festival.

Founded in 2010, the South Haven Performance Series is an all-volunteer community-based organization committed to providing a rich mixture of musical arts for area residents and visitors.

Most concerts are held during the spring and summer months with an additional holiday concert presented annually in December.

Performances are provided with the support of the South Haven Community Foundation, corporate sponsors and individual donors.

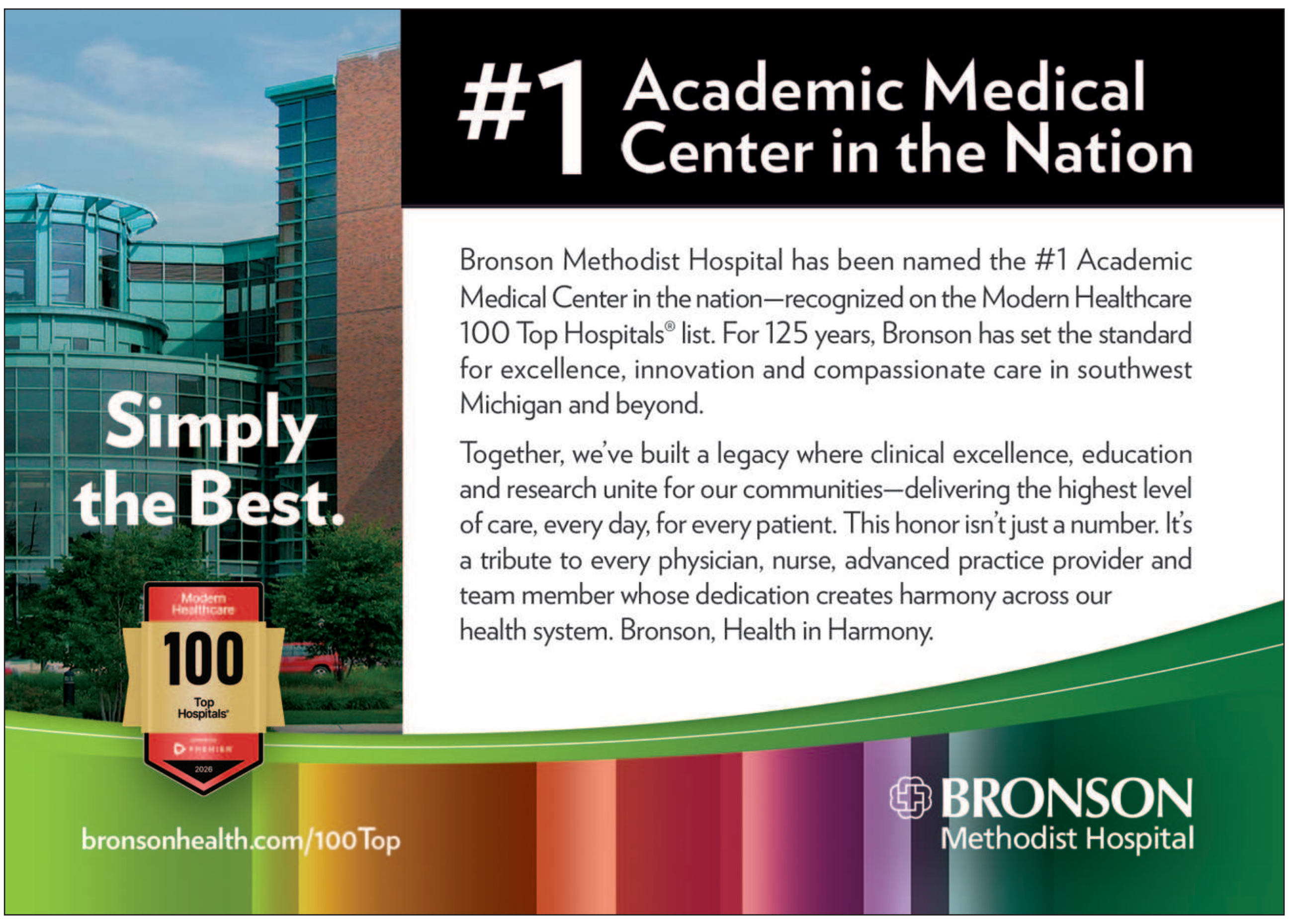
A $15 admission fee is charged for the spring and summer concerts while the holiday concert is presented free of charge as a gift to the community. Students are always admitted free. Tickets are sold on the evening of the concert.

Photos provided

Violinist Desirée Ruhstrat.

Pianist Marta Aznavoorian.

Cellist Ben Solomonow.



The Spotlight

A Weekly Guide To Services & Business Around Town.

Confused about your health insurance options?
Under 65 health plan available now
Call Dale K. Morgan "DK"
Your local Medicare expert since 1994
269-637-6619

JENSEN'S EXCAVATING INCORPORATED
Driveways • Water & Sewer • Septic Systems • Demolition
Crushed Concrete • Sand • Gravel • Stone • Topsoil
www.JensensExcavating.com
(269) 637-5642

Driver's License Restoration
It's a Process... We Can Help!
Drunk Driving & Criminal Defense
"Friends... Don't Let Friends Plead Guilty!"
Law Office of Frederick J. Taylor
269-388-6060 1-800-250-FRED

MILLER
D.L. MILLER FUNERAL HOME, INC.
Bangor Chapel
258 W. Monroe Street
Bangor, MI 49013
(269) 427-7551
Ryan K. Oliver, Owner/Manager
Bloomingdale Chapel
203 East Spring
P.O. Box 171
Bloomingdale, MI 49026
(269) 521-3121
Floyd Decker, Manager

If interested in including your business here contact freid@thehp.com

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Ongoing events

Visually impaired and blind persons support group meeting: Every third Wednesday of the month at 1 p.m. at Senior Services of Van Buren County.

Dementia and Alzheimer's caregivers support group meeting: Every third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church library.

Three Blondes Brewing: Trivia night on Thursdays at 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.

Sparkle and Spice Boutique: Mom and Me play date. Fridays from 9 to 10 a.m.

South Haven Center for the Arts: Center Studio for adults from 6-8 p.m. on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Artists of any level can bring their own projects to work on. Basic art supplies will be available. Attendees must be 18 years old and over. Members are free, non-members cost $5.

South Haven Center for the Arts: Center Studio for ages 9 to 13 from 4-5:30 p.m. every Wednesday. Young artists are invited to create art at their own pace with an instructor to help guide as needed. Free workshop but a $10 donation is suggested to help cover cost of supplies.

Candlelight Yoga: Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Church of Epiphany. Cost is $15.

Food pantry: First Congregational Church open from 10 a.m. to noon on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. It is a drive-up food pantry.

Food pantry: Sacred Heart Catholic Church. For Bangor residents only. Open from 1 to 4 p.m. on Thursdays.

Food, clothing, baby pantry: Lily of the Valley Church in Covert. Open from noon to 2 p.m. on Wednesdays. Must call the central office to register.

Personal care and clothing pantry: First Assembly of God open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesdays. Must call the central office to register.

Baby pantry: Peace Lutheran Church open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Must call the central office to register.

Baby pantry: Simpson United Methodist Church in Bangor. Open from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesdays. Must call the central office to register.

HawksHead: Pasta on the Patio every Wednesday at 5 p.m.

Michigan Maritime Museum: Hands-on the Harbor every Thursday at 10:30 a.m.

Lakeside Social Bowling Alley: Glow Bowl every Friday from noon to 9 p.m.

Bridge: Chicago Scoring at 1 p.m. on Tuesdays at the South Haven Memorial Library.

Bridge: Duplicate Scoring at 1 p.m. on Wednesdays at the South Haven Memorial Library.

First United Methodist Church: Free meals every Tuesday night. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Meal is served at 6 p.m.

South Haven Memorial Library: Bridge Card Game from 1 to 4 p.m. every Tuesday and Wednesday. Open to the public. Beginners are welcome.

Covert Branch Library: After school art workshop for students grades 6 through 12 every Monday from 3 to 5 p.m.

South Haven Farmers Market: Open from 8 a.m. to 2pm on Saturdays, from May to October; and on Wednesdays from June through August.

South Haven Center for the Arts: National juried exhibition with the Arts and Aging Partnership of Southwest Michigan on display from June 20 to Aug. 1.

South Haven Memorial Library: Kids story time and yoga class at 10 a.m. on Mondays.

June

21 – First Congregation UCC: Concert Series feature a special Father's Day performance by Southside Denny at 3 p.m. Tickets are $20 at the door.

22 – Lake Michigan College: free screening of "Old Heart" at 6:30 p.m. hosted by the First Hebrew Congregation of South Haven, Lily of the Valley Church in Covert and Temple B'nai Shalom in St. Joseph.

22 – South Haven Memorial Library: Moa the Dino Bird at 11 a.m. Meet Moa, the giant bird that once roamed New Zealand. Artist Megan Bennett brings this fascinating prehistoric creature to life through art and story telling.

22-26 – Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum: Bailey's Budding Naturalists week two. Online registration is open. Campers can register for one or both weeks.

The City of South Haven and Foundry Hall present the 2026

Riverfront Concert Series

Join us for free, family-friendly concerts at Riverfront Park all summer long!

Concerts start at 7pm.

☺ denotes a kid friendly activity begining at 6pm.

In case of inclement weather, concerts move to the Huron Street Pavilion.

- ☺ 6/25 **Kevin McDaniel House Band**- classic rock
- 7/2 **JR Clarke Blues Band -** blues!
- 7/9 **Cabildo** - Rock en Español!
- ☺ 7/16 **DB Horns** - Brass band pop music
- ☺ 7/23 **The Incantations** - Americana, rock, folk
- ☺ 7/30 **Pan de Monium** - Bloomingdale steel pan
- 8/6 Blueberry Fest
- 8/13 **Jared Knox and the Hägarbombs** - country
- ☺ 8/20 **Casco Band** - traditional band music
- ☺ 8/27 **Desmond Jones** - funk/rock jam band

2026 Sponsors

South Haven Area Community Foundation — For good. For all.

Visit South Haven

SHOUT for South Haven

Cogdal Vineyards
Rotary Club of South Haven
Apple Insurance
Annex by Black River Barn
Shores Vacation Rentals
South Haven Center for the Arts
Mayor Annie Brown Hardt Insurance

Foundry Hall

Al-Van Humane Society

Adopt ♥ Volunteer ♥ Donate ♥ Advocate

73303 8th Ave. PO Box 421 South Haven, MI 49090
phone 269.637.5062 fax 269.639.2242
Mon, Tue, Thurs, Fri 11 am to 5:30 pm; Sat 11 am to 3 pm; Wed, Sun Closed

Meet our Pets of the Week, Sass-parilla!

Sass-parilla is a dainty 1-year-old tuxedo cat with a beautiful face, a big personality and lots of opinions. When she first arrived, she made sure everyone knew exactly how she felt about things, which earned her the name Sass-parilla. If you're looking for a cat with character and appreciate a girl who knows what she wants, Sass-parilla is ready to meet you. Submit an adoption survey at al-van.org/adopt!

Dig for Diamonds

Join us tomorrow, during Harbor Fest for Dig for Diamonds! Come see us at Johnny's Lakeshore Jewelry in Downtown South Haven from 11am-4pm. A scoop of sand is only $5, and you can sift to see if you found treasure! You'll also be able to give some love to one of our sweet shelter pups. A big thank you to Johnny's for sponsoring this annual event. All proceeds benefit your local shelter animals at Al-Van Humane Society

THIS WEEK'S WISH LIST

L/XL Stuffable Dog Toys (like Kongs, Chew Kings, Toppls) Peanut Butter, Apple Sauce, and Pumpkin to fill them with.

29th Annual

COTTAGE WALK

Saturday, June 27th

Tickets $20. Available at
The South Haven Visitors Bureau, 546 Phoenix Street
& The Chamber of Commerce, 606 Phillips Street
or on June 27th at the Farmer's Market

SHOUT FOR SOUTH HAVEN "working to make a great community even better"

Scott Club — South Haven Scott Club — Center for Cultural Programs since 1883

shoutforsouthhaven.org • scottclub.org

South Haven *Performance Series*

LINCOLN TRIO

Nominated for a 2017 Grammy Award for Best Performance by a Small Ensemble and a 2024 Latin Grammy, the Lincoln Trio has become one of the midwest's most celebrated chamber ensembles. Praised for their "joy of sheer technical ability, unanimity of phrasing and beautiful blended tone," each member is an artist of international renown.

Friday, June 26

7:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
429 Michigan Avenue,
South Haven, MI 49090

The South Haven Performance Series thanks the South Haven Community Foundation and our many friends for supporting the 16th season.

No advance sales. Admission is $15 (cash only). Students admitted free.

www.southhavenperformanceseries.com
Follow us on Facebook

FOCUS

THE CONVERSATION

As America approaches its 250th anniversary, The Federalist remains an indispensable guide to understanding the constitutional system and the nation's enduring independence

By JORDAN CASH
Michigan State University (The Conversation)

More people are talking about the Declaration of Independence now than they likely have for decades, largely because of the festivities, exhibits, historical commemorations and other public events associated with the upcoming 250th anniversary of American independence.

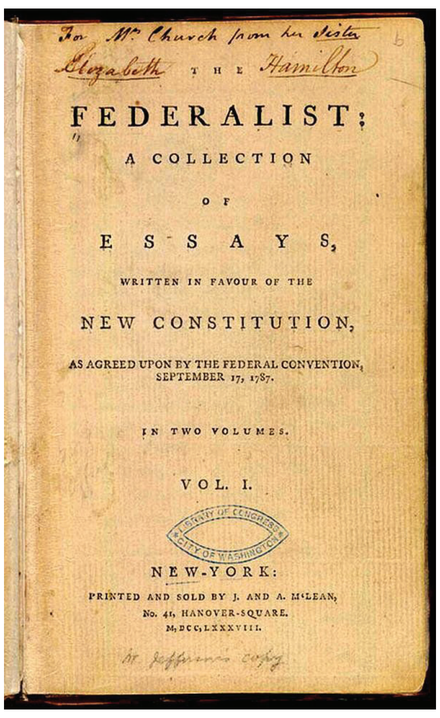
But even as they discuss the historical meaning, purpose and ideas of the declaration, they should remember that independence was only the first step in becoming a nation.

Despite laying out the purposes of the new nation, the declaration did not say what kind of government the new United States should have. That discussion was left for later debates, leading first to the Articles of Confederation and then, ultimately, to the Constitution.

Yet, fully understanding the Constitution requires referring to the another crucial founding-era document: The Federalist, known to many as The Federalist Papers. Without it, the Constitution may not have been ratified, and it has helped guide American government and law for the past 2½ centuries.

Drive for ratification

Under the Articles of Confederation, adopted by the Continental Congress in late 1777, the national government was exceptionally weak, unable to levy taxes or tariffs or enforce treaty obligations. Moreover, the states often abused their authority, both over their own citizens and with regard to each other. For example, states would often impose tariffs on each other's goods, even if those goods were moving only from Virginia to Maryland and vice versa, thereby inhibiting the development of a national market and hamstringing internal trade.


For Mrs Church from her Sister Elizabeth Hamilton

THE FEDERALIST:
A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS,
WRITTEN IN FAVOUR OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION,
AS AGREED UPON BY THE FEDERAL CONVENTION, SEPTEMBER 17, 1787.
IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CITY OF WASHINGTON
NEW-YORK:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. AND A. M'LEAN,
No. 41, HANOVER-SQUARE.
M,DCC,LXXXVIII.

The Constitution sought to correct these problems by creating a much stronger national government able to protect itself from national security threats, both foreign and domestic, and secure liberty at the same time.

Those supporting ratification adopted the name Federalists on the idea that they supported strengthening the national government, which was often described as a federal union. Their opponents, who sought to defeat the Constitution's ratification, were then dubbed the Anti-Federalists, much to the latter's consternation.

While there were a variety of Federalist authors writing to support the Constitution during the ratification debates in 1787-88, the essays of The Federalist were specifically co-authored by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay under the collective pseudonym "Publius."

The practical political purpose of the essays was to convince New York to ratify the Constitution. Nine states had to ratify to put the Constitution into effect, yet it was recognized that without key states such as New York, Virginia, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, the Constitution – and more broadly the union – could not survive.

Thus, even though 10 states ratified before New York, enabling the Constitution to go into effect, New York's ratification remained essential.

Each of The Federalist's 85 essays – 51 by Hamilton, 29 by Madison and five by Jay – were addressed "To the People of the State of New York." Nearly all were published in New York newspapers as op-eds, with some republished in other states. They were meant to be read and thought about by an interested and educated public, as the authors understood the importance of public opinion not simply to the ratification process but to any democratic system.

Ratifying the Constitution was the immediate goal of The Federalist. But in making their arguments, the authors went further, addressing fundamental questions of politics by laying out the political theory that underlies that Constitution.

In short, The Federalist sits at the intersection where theory meets practice.

Advancing political science

In "Federalist 1," Hamilton breaks down major issues to be considered in deciding whether to adopt the Constitution: the utility of the union; the defects of the Articles of Confederation; the need for energetic government; how the Constitution is analogous to the New York constitution; how the Constitution will preserve liberty and prosperity; and how the Constitution creates a republican government. Such a republican government is defined by Madison in "Federalist 39" as a government with powers derived from the people and administered by representatives for a period of time.

Reflecting the political debate, however, the authors had to be flexible with their writing plans as they responded to the arguments made by their Anti-Federalist opponents.

Yet, even in that dynamic environment, there are two consistent themes that contribute to The Federalist's timelessness.

The first theme revolves around what Hamilton in "Federalist 9" calls "the science of politics." Hamilton and Madison frequently address the ideas of past political philosophers and the traditional assumptions of what republics were supposed to look like.

This is most evident in "Federalist 10" where Madison overturns the long-held belief, articulated most clearly by the French philosopher Montesquieu and embraced by the Anti-Federalists, that republics needed to be small to preserve liberty.

Madison shows that, on the contrary, it was a large republic that could best deal with the problem of factions and preserve liberty by preventing any faction from gaining a majority, thereby providing "a republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government."

Similarly, in "Federalist 70," Hamilton explains that a single strong executive is not inherently monarchical and antithetical to republican government, but rather is essential to a republic's proper operation. "Energy in the Executive is a leading character in the definition of good government," he wrote.

The Federalist advanced political science itself, changing the conception of what a republic was and could be.

Accounting for self-interest

A second theme is the recognition of how human motivations interact with institutions.

Past philosophers, such as Aristotle, emphasized the necessity of virtue in both the people and their rulers, and Montesquieu argued that virtue was the defining principle of republics.

But Hamilton and Madison, focusing more on historical experience than theory, emphasized the need for institutions to account for the self-interested behavior of officeholders.

This emphasis is evident at the very beginning when Hamilton asserts in "Federalist 1" that a clean debate on the merits of any public proposal "is a thing more ardently to be wished than seriously to be expected," and that some people will be driven by personal interests.

In "Federalist 51," Madison provides the clearest articulation of this view with his famous statement, "Ambition must be made to counteract ambition. The interest of the man must be connected with the constitutional rights of the place."

In their view, it is not enough to rely on the virtue of officeholders. But we can arrange our institutions in such a way that our low, base, self-interested human nature may be channeled to ultimately serve a higher public good.

This is not, however, to say that The Federalist is a cynical work.

Enlightened statesmen not always at the helm

In "Federalist 55" Madison points out that "there are other qualities in human nature which justify a certain portion of esteem and confidence."

That optimistic statement is followed by his observation, "Republican government presupposes the existence of these qualities in a higher degree than any other form."

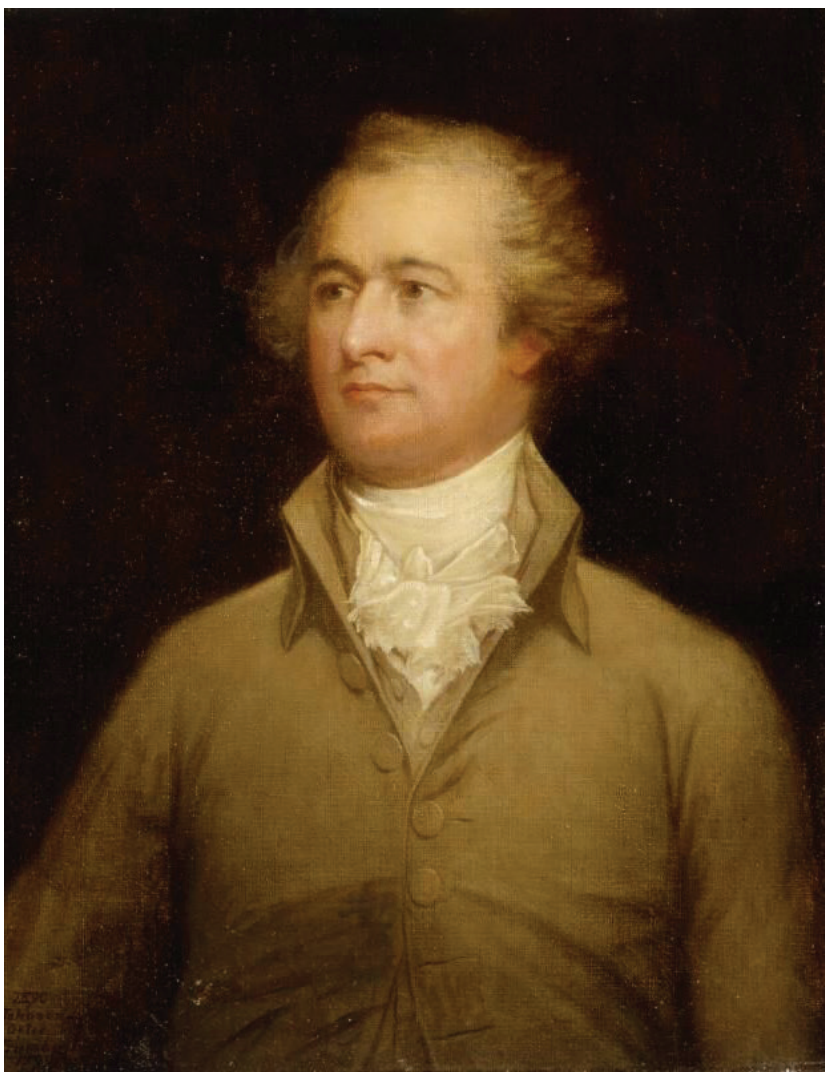
Republics rely on the people having some measure of public virtue to work. The key insight Madison brings out is that such higher qualities alone cannot be relied upon.

The institutions created by the Constitution are set up to be functional, but they are also built to account for the kind of human beings who will inhabit them. As Madison succinctly put it in "Federalist 10": "Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm."

Thomas Jefferson called The Federalist "the best commentary on the principles of government which ever was written." It remains the most systematic and important exploration of our constitutional system.

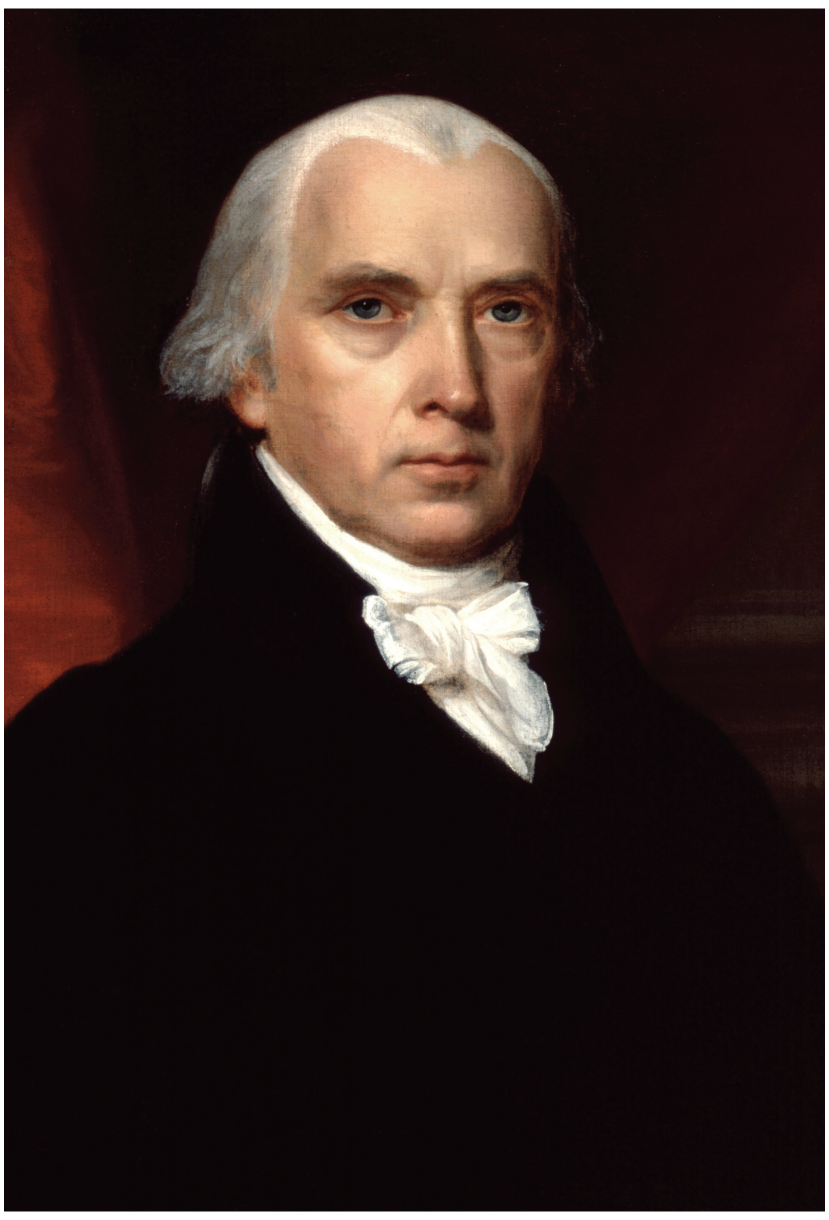
As Americans celebrate the 250th anniversary of American independence, it is worth reflecting on the institutions that have facilitated the endurance of that independence. You can find no better guide to that reflection than The Federalist.

Jordan Cash is an assistant professor of political theory and constitutional democracy at Michigan State University. The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. This article is republished under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article at https://theconversation.com.



Wikimedia Commons

Alexander Hamilton, by Jonathan Eastman Johnson.



Wikimedia Commons

James Madison, by John Vanderlyn.

Wikimedia Commons

John Jay, by Gilbert Stuart.

FOCUS

How **out-of-work fishermen** saved the American Revolution

By CHRISTOPHER MAGRA
University of Tennessee (The Conversation)

John F. Leavitt via Wikimedia Commons
Hannah, owned by John Glover of marblehead, Massachusetts, was the first armed vessel fitted out and in the service of the United States, September 1775.

Daderot via Wikimedia Commons
A statue of John Glover on Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, by Martin Milmore (1875).

George Washington knew his forces could not win the American Revolutionary War without some measure of sea power. “It follows then as certain as that night succeeds the day,” he later wrote in a letter, “that without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it everything honorable and glorious.”

The problem was that the American commander did not have a navy.

As a professor of early American history, I have taught courses on the American Revolution for more than 20 years and have written two books on its maritime dimensions. Washington’s solution wouldn’t come from a French shipyard or a congressional committee. It would come from a group of angry, out-of-work New England fishermen.

Supplying the army from the sea

In 1775, American ground forces managed to lay siege to the British army in Boston, but Washington needed provisions and military stores to sustain pressure on this key commercial hub. Looking out across the Atlantic Ocean, he noticed supply ships arriving in droves from Great Britain – unescorted – to supply the British army in Boston with guns and ammunition.

Unbeknownst to them, the British had already handed the American commander the ships and mariners he needed to capture those resources.

The Sons of Liberty, a network of political activists, had angered the British government by resisting taxes and commercial regulations – from the 1765 Stamp Act, which taxed printed documents, to the 1773 Tea Act, which controlled what tea leaves made their way into North American cupboards.

To punish rebels for their treason, Parliament passed the Restraining Act of 1775, banning New Englanders from fishing on the Atlantic Ocean. Overnight, thousands of skilled mariners – men who spent their lives wrestling 100-pound cod out of the freezing, storm-tossed North Atlantic – were out of a job. They weren’t just unemployed; they were furious. These fishermen left their work tools and ships behind, picked up weapons and joined the siege of Boston alongside American farmers.

Ashley Bowen, who lived and worked in Marblehead, Massachusetts, the principal fishing port in America at the time, recorded in his journal on May 22, 1775, “the fishermen are enlisting quite quick.”

A letter from a French diplomat to the foreign minister in Paris confirmed the news a couple of weeks later: “4,800 sailors seeing they were going to be deprived of their fishing rights, deserted their ships and joined their compatriots under arms.”

Creating the first navy

Washington, commissioned by Congress as commander in chief of all American armed forces in June 1775, saw an opportunity. He didn’t wait for Congress to build new frigates. Instead, he reached out to John Glover, a fish merchant from Marblehead and a commissioned officer under his command.

Washington’s plan was simple: Take the sturdy, salt-stained schooners used for fishing and turn them into armed, seagoing predators.

The first of these was Glover’s own fishing vessel and trade ship, Hannah. She wasn’t a formidable man-of-war but a 78-ton workhorse that spent summers at the Grand Banks and winters hauling rum and sugar from the Caribbean. Washington armed the trade ship with a few cannons, manned her with fishermen and sent her out to hijack British supply ships to help his army win the siege of Boston.

Just two days after the Hannah was underway, her crew captured the Unity, a sloop loaded with naval stores and lumber, supplies sorely needed by British forces in Boston.

Between August and October 1775, Washington outfitted a fleet of schooners at Congress’ expense to intercept British supply ships off the coast of New England. These vessels and crews, whose wages were paid by the American government, constituted what many historians consider America’s first navy. Washington reminded each captain that they sailed “at the Continental Expense.” These orders from Washington and the payments made by Congress made these ships official American warships, operating under the authority of what would become the federal government.

These recruits didn’t need nautical training; they were seasoned seafarers who had battled rough waters and gale force winds. On Oct. 13, 1775, George Washington wrote to his brother, John Augustine Washington, that the fishermen were “soldiers … who have been bred to the sea.”

In 1776, Washington informed the governor of Connecticut, who had asked to draft seamen from Washington’s regiments for his own naval expedition, that he could not spare any. “I must depend chiefly upon them for a successful opposition to the Enemy,” Washington explained.

Keeping the Revolution alive

This fleet of converted fishing boats punched above its weight: In the early years of the war they captured 55 British vessels. One such prize, the Nancy, was transporting 2,000 muskets, 30 tons of musket balls and a massive 15-inch brass mortar – supplies the American army desperately needed for the war effort.

Because the British navy was spread too thin, with too few warships available to police the Atlantic coastline, the armed fishing vessels were able to disrupt supply lines and keep the Revolution alive through its infancy. By the time the British realized the threat, the damage was done.

On Feb. 26, 1776, just a few months after Washington launched his fleet, British Admiral Molyneux Shuldham wrote in a report to his superiors that his forces in Boston were low on everything from naval supplies to weapons. What little they could find had to be purchased “at the most extravagant prices.”

The British government had not assigned military convoys to trans-Atlantic shipments at the start of the conflict in 1775. Now, Shuldham recommended arming the supply ships themselves, since valuable stores were being intercepted by rebels in small vessels, “however attentive our Officers to their Duty.”

He concluded the report with an ominous note, explaining that he simply did not have the resources to do everything that was being asked of him – support the army, blockade rebel ports and protect British ships bound for Boston: “I must beg leave to observe to you the very few Ships I am provided with to enable Me to Co-operate with the Army, Cruize off the Ports of the Rebels to prevent their receiving Supplies, or protect those destined to this place from falling into their hands.”

Christopher Magra is a professor of American history at the University of Tennessee. The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. This article is republished under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article at https://theconversation.com.

William Nowland Van Powell via Naval History and Heritage Command
The Naval Committee purchased the merchant ship Black Prince on Nov. 4, 1775, from John Barry, the first American naval officer. Renamed Alfred, with a strengthened interior hull and gun ports cut into its sides, the ship was placed in commission on Dec. 3, 1775. That day, while the ship was anchored in Philadelphia, Lieutenant John Paul Jones raised the Grand Union Flag – the first official American national flag.

FOCUS

Chicago schools engineer invents a device to lower lead levels in drinking fountains

But can it scale for a citywide crisis?

By CHRISTIANA FREITAG
Chicago Tribune (TNS)

CHICAGO — Late at night in 2016, Michael Ramos sat hunched over his dining room table in his suburban Harwood Heights condominium, assembling valves and motor parts he'd picked up from local electronics shops.

By day, he worked as a building engineer at Von Steuben Metropolitan Science Center high school in Chicago. By night, he tried to solve a problem he feared was putting students, and his own children, at risk: toxic lead in drinking water.

Ramos attended evening classes to become a home inspector and spent months tinkering on a palm-sized invention he believed could solve the lead contamination of the school's water fountains. Several had tested above the Illinois Department of Public Health's 5 parts per billion threshold, according to Chicago Public Schools.

Today, dozens of his devices have been installed in city and suburban schools, as well as in residences, but the city's lead contamination problem is huge.

"Families and children are being exposed every day, and they don't even know it because you can't see it, you can't smell it, you can't taste it," said Ramos, who has three children. "But it's there."

Chicago has the most lead lines in the nation, an infrastructure challenge that will take decades to address. In buildings and homes constructed before 1986, the year lead pipes were banned, contamination remains an invisible risk, including inside many of Chicago's public schools.

Children are especially vulnerable to lead exposure, which can harm early brain development and lead to lifelong cognitive and behavioral issues. There is no safe level of lead exposure, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and recent studies have found at least two-thirds of children under the age of 6 have been exposed to lead-contaminated water in Chicago.

For Ramos, he said he hadn't paid much attention to Chicago's water issue until the crisis in Flint, Michigan.

"(Flint) opened up the nation to the idea that we do have major water quality issues," Ramos said. "As a father, I'm like, 'Wow, well now you have my full attention.'"

In 2014, the city of Flint switched its water supply from Lake Huron to the Flint River to save money, causing distribution pipes to corrode and leach lead and other contaminants into municipal drinking water. Two years later, a state of emergency was declared, and Flint residents were told not to drink their tap water – but the damage was already done. Roughly one-quarter of children in Flint have tested for elevated levels of lead since the crisis, according to a 2022 Cornell University report.

For Ramos' future business partner, Isidro Hurtado, the crisis hit close to home. His 8-year-old son was living with the boy's mother just 5 miles from Flint in 2016.

"I remember going through that as a parent thinking, 'Has my kid been drinking this water the whole time?'" Hurtado said.

After Flint, Chicago began widespread lead testing in public schools, revealing elevated levels across the system. But Ramos wasn't willing to wait for a long-term fix.

"(Lead contamination is) happening in my house, it's happening in my schools," Ramos said.

"I see these babies, these little kids come from outside, from recess, and they go straight to one of these drinking fountains," he added. "It's just tough to watch."

Replacing lead service lines can take years and thousands of dollars. Ramos wanted to find an immediate solution for his family and the thousands of schoolchildren he serves.

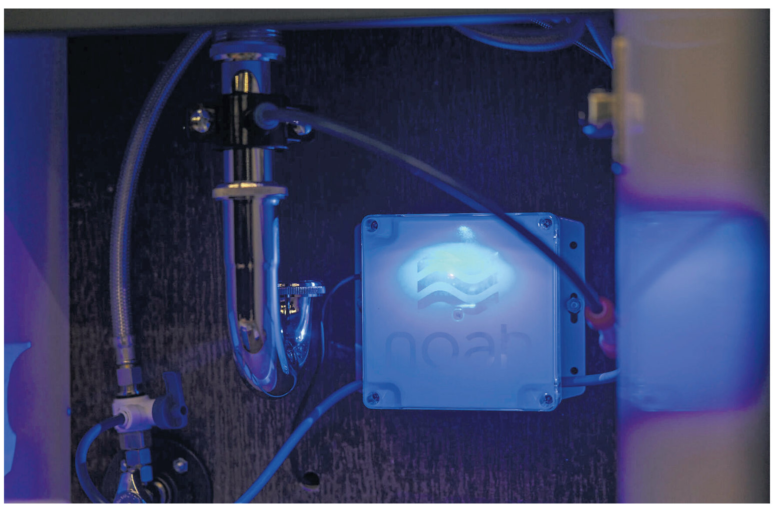
His idea was simple: Keep water moving.

When water sits idle in aging pipes, he explained, the protective orthophosphate layer that prevents corrosion begins to break down after several hours. That leaves stagnant water in direct contact with lead and other metals.

"We have an aging infrastructure," Ramos said. "(The lead pipes) are rusting from the inside; the longer water sits in a pipe, the more likely it's going to leach those components."

Brian Cassella / Chicago Tribune / TNS

Michael Ramos installs the Noah system to remove lead from drinking water for homeowner Anthony Argentine, right, on April 21 on Chicago's Northwest Side.



The NOAH System that removes lead contamination from drinking water is displayed Thursday at mHUB, a water innovation center in Chicago's West Loop.

In 2023, Hurtado joined Ramos to create what would become the Noah system: a lead-removal device that doesn't rely on costly, backlogged pipe replacements. Instead, the system automatically flushes drinking fountains every three hours, preventing water from sitting stagnant in lead-lined pipes.

"Nothing existed (like that) on the market," he said. "So I'm like, 'You know what? I'm going to try to build one myself.'"

The only reliable fix

As a CPS engineer for over three decades and after inspection training, Ramos said he felt uniquely positioned to take on this issue.

In 2016, CPS recommended manual flushing – running fountains for several minutes at the start of the week. Ramos worried about whether engineers could keep up with manually flushing over 40 drinking fountains in a given school.

"That's really not solving anything," Ramos said. "Especially for the students in athletics who start coming in at 6 a.m., they're the first ones in the building. They're in the gyms or in the swimming pools. They're in the fitness rooms. They drink water right off the bat. So that means that water has been sitting stagnant overnight, and these kids are the first ones getting exposed."

Ramos became convinced automation was the only reliable fix.

The Noah system – named after Ramos' nephew, who has autism, a condition sometimes linked to elevated lead exposure – automatically flushes water every few hours, preventing stagnation without replacing pipes.

Auto-flushing devices are effective in turning water over in areas with water quality concerns, according to Kim Biggs, a public information officer with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

In 2016, Ramos installed his first Noah device at Von Steuben. Ramos said lead levels that had previously exceeded 20 parts per billion dropped to nondetectable levels after installation – and have remained that way for nearly a decade. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency limit is 15 parts per billion.

Hurtado said his wife, a teacher at Von Steuben, introduced him to Ramos.

"When I first learned what Michael was doing, I just wanted to be a part of it," said Hurtado, who was working on creative development for another startup at the time. "Whatever you need me to do. We need a website, a logo. He had the name, but I wanted to help build the brand organization."

Since then, Ramos has installed the system at Orr Academy High School and Belding Elementary School, suburban school districts in Elgin, Justice, Crete and Monee, and single-family residences.

Chicago Public Schools spokesperson Sylvia Barragan said in a statement that the technology has improved water quality.

She added auto-flushing has reduced the workload of manual weekly flushing and streamlined maintenance for school engineers in large facilities.

"The District expresses deep gratitude for the initiative shown by its Facilities Operations staff, taking particular pride in their ability to make a positive impact for the District," Barragan said in the statement.

But Ramos and Hurtado are frustrated by the slow progress.

"Whenever we talk to people, they're like, 'Why isn't this in every school?'" Hurtado said. "(CPS) is just not taking action."

They said they think budget constraints are holding CPS back from adding more Noah systems.

Barragan said CPS is balancing its priorities for school buildings, which average 86 years old.

"While auto-flushing systems are helpful, they are not considered essential as the District's manual flushing methods are working," Barragan said. "CPS is committed to prioritizing critical needs, ensuring that funds are wisely allocated to maintain and improve its facilities."

Ramos said replacing lead pipes and internal plumbing in a given school could run in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, while a Noah system in a large school facility like Von Steuben could cost around $20,000.

Across the city, fixing all the lead pipes in Chicago public schools would likely cost in the billions, Ramos estimated, while installing Noahs in these schools would cost around $10 million, without the need for major construction.

Each Noah device is priced just under $500, with an average annual water rate of $22 per unit in Illinois, which covers the cost of running water every three hours. Ramos said consistent flushing – whether done automatically or manually – is required to prevent corrosion.

"If stagnation is not addressed, we will see lead levels forever," he said in a statement.

So far, Ramos said he's donated all of his auto-flushing devices to CPS.

Meanwhile, a Milwaukee-based water solutions company called Zurn Elkay donated 30 similar auto-flushing fixtures to CPS, which have been installed in 18 schools located in underresourced communities, Barragan said. Rather than targeting an entire school, this donation went toward specific water fountains that exceeded state lead levels in multiple schools, she said.

Broader reach

Ramos has been a CPS engineer for over 30 years, allowing him to stay close to the city's water quality issues. But he has also branched out to suburban school districts and residences, and in one case, was able to help when lead levels became a community crisis.

In mid-August 2019, the Illinois attorney general's office and Will County state's attorney's office filed a lawsuit against Aqua Illinois, alleging the company failed to provide a safe water supply in University Park.

Testing in schools in the Crete-Monee School District, which enrolls students from University Park, revealed lead levels 90 times higher than the EPA limit.

Just last month, a federal judge approved a $12.5 million settlement in the class-action lawsuit between Aqua Illinois and University Park residents affected by the water contamination.

Keith McLean, buildings director for the school district, compared the situation to Flint after Aqua Illinois, the area's main water supplier, switched from groundwater wells to the Kankakee River. Aqua then added a phosphate mix, allegedly removing a protective layer in the plumbing that allowed lead to leach into homes, schools and businesses.

The Crete-Monee school district installed Noah systems at six schools. As a result, drinking fountains that averaged over 58 parts per billion were lowered to undetectable levels of lead.

"This flushing system would have eliminated it altogether," McLean said. "You're flushing everything out that could have been in those pipes."

In the four years since, McLean said some of his schools have replaced all of their water pipes to lower the lead levels, but he said he'd still consider adding more Noah units in University Park schools to avoid another crisis from other contaminants.

"Even without lead, the flushing is always going to be helpful," McLean said.

He noted when schools are on break, custodians may not flush water fountains as regularly as needed.

"I can picture it in my head, the stagnation," he said. "If you leave a glass of water on the counter for a week, you'll see what it looks like. It doesn't look clear anymore. I think that's my thought process in consistently flushing. And if you can take that manual aspect out of it, it's worth the money."

Some homeowners have also embraced the technology.

Paul Brourman, the father of two teenagers and an early Noah adopter in 2018, said he didn't want to wait years for city-led pipe replacement in his century-old Evanston home.

"I just didn't want to keep playing around with having the lead in the house at all," he said.

Brourman said he's surprised more people haven't bought into the flushing solution.

"If there is a longer-term solve, it would be shocking if people didn't do something in the meantime to protect the kids, to provide clean drinking water, or the cleanest, best solution possible in the meantime," Brourman said. "You wonder, what would it take to drive attention (to this issue) again?"

On a recent Sunday, Ramos and Hurtado were working at the Galewood home of Anthony and Paulina Argentine, who are expecting their first child.

"Having a newborn, it's like the most sensitive point in your life," Anthony Argentine said. "So we're trying to have as clean of food, clean of water as possible."

Getting pregnant motivated the couple to look into a cost-efficient option to protect their child from lead contamination.

"(Chicago) is projecting 20 years to fix this," Anthony Argentine said. "After a while, you're kind of like, 'I think I just need to do this myself.' And now there's so much cool technology, so there are solutions. And when you find something this affordable, it's kind of like the best thing."

Business challenges

Despite success stories and an obvious need, Ramos said finding enough customers to build a stable business has been a challenge for a small startup without major investors.

He's sent thousands of outreach emails to communities like Milwaukee and Elgin, hoping to raise awareness about interim solutions. Both cities share Chicago's widespread lead contamination issue: Milwaukee has had to close multiple schools in recent years due to high rates of lead poisoning, while Elgin has the second-largest lead service lines outside Chicago.

But a growing number of investors are paying attention to water technologies in the Midwest. Chicago's first Sustainable Water Tech Accelerator, a program backed by the National Science Foundation and operated jointly by Chicago-based hard-tech innovation center mHUB and the nonprofit Current, aims to build up the city's "circular blue economy," said Nina Dudnik, Current's chief commercial officer.

Current hosted the Chicago Water Week, an annual citywide event in May that highlights water innovation and technology, including startups in its water tech accelerator.

Noah was one of seven water startups selected for the accelerator, each receiving $200,000 to get their businesses off the ground.

"Noah systems has really incredible quantitative data from their work with the Chicago Public Schools on the levels of lead in the water before and after using their technology," said Dudnik. "They've really demonstrated just how dramatically they can reduce that."

The science foundation awarded Current up to $45 million in late March to continue scaling its investments in water innovation.

"Ultimately for the city of Chicago and lots of other cities across the country, the goal is to replace the pipes, but in that interim, you need a solution so that our children are not exposed to lead-contaminated water," Dudnik added.

Michael Sundermeier, mHUB accelerator's platform and program manager, joined Noah as its chief executive officer in early May to scale the startup beyond the Chicago area.

Sundermeier has worked with over 200 startups as a venture capitalist, but he said he was waiting for the right one to join. Having experienced water quality concerns growing up in Chicago's south suburbs, Sundermeier said he was drawn to Noah's mission and wanted to help grow the product.

"In Chicago, we have this infrastructure of old lead pipes, so to be back in the school market, solving problems that students need is so important," he said.

With the accelerator's support, Ramos and Hurtado are now developing a new version of the device that includes an app so users can monitor a dashboard for schools with multiple Noah units.

For now, Ramos said their mission remains simple.

"Get the lead problem out of the equation," he said. "Then maybe we can better understand what's happening with our kids."

FOCUS

Is soccer taking over America … or are Americans taking over football?

By KIRK BOWMAN
Professor of International Affairs,
Georgia Institute of Technology (The Conversation)

Soccer purists have long feared the "Americanization" of the game. But in one key respect, it is already happening: ownership.

Americans now own more than 40 European soccer clubs, including current English Premier League champion Arsenal, Italian Serie A champion Inter Milan and storied teams such as Manchester United and Liverpool. Americans are also investing heavily in the lower leagues, taking ownership of two dozen clubs outside the top division, including Birmingham City, whose ownership group includes former NFL star Tom Brady, and Norwich City, purchased by Milwaukee Bucks owner Mark Attanasio in 2022.

And while global fans may carp at superficial changes that hint at the growing influence of American culture – halftime shows, cheerleaders and the use of "soccer" over "football – the reality is, it is at the level of ownership where Americans have the biggest capacity to change the game. It is a trend my colleagues and I have been charting for several years.

The yanks are coming, the yanks are coming!

U.S. sports ownership norms and rules differ greatly from the traditional European model: U.S. owners tend to operate like "emperors" who can move franchises from city to city in pursuit of bigger profits; European owners are more inclined to act as "caretakers" and traditionally come from the local business community. They see their teams as passion projects that they're willing to sink money into.

But the global rise of soccer has seen wealthy Americans increasingly take an interest in European teams. It began in earnest in 2005 when American businessman Malcolm Glazer bought Manchester United. The Glazer-leveraged buyout sparked protest from the club's supporters trust at the time and has grown as the owners sucked out more than 1 billion pounds from the club to pay back debt interest, repayments, dividends and fees.

But such opposition, which has only accelerated since 2018 with the entrance of U.S. private equity groups, has done little to put off American owners.

Today, there are 11 American ownership groups in the English Premier League – and they are more accustomed to the U.S. way of doing things. Combined, they own six NFL teams, four NBA teams, two MLB franchises and four NHL clubs. Stan Kroenke, the owner of English champion Arsenal, also owns the Los Angeles Rams, the NBA's Denver Nuggets and the NHL's Colorado Avalanche.

Ownership of these franchises has made some very rich men ever more wealthy as the value of top teams grew. But traditional soccer fans are increasingly concerned about this shift toward a profit-driven style of ownership.

The ups and downs of the pyramid system

But there is a potential barrier to these American owners making megabucks: the structure of soccer itself. It represents a battle between U.S. "closed" leagues – that is, with fixed franchises – and a European pyramid structure in which teams can drop down divisions, wiping millions of dollars off their valuation in the process.

To understand why U.S. and English leagues have these different models, you need to look back to how professional sports leagues in the two territories were originally designed. Until the late 19th century, sports in England and the U.S. followed similar trajectories, with the baseball teams in America and soccer teams in England playing in organized leagues with predictable schedules.

Then, in 1876, baseball's National League was founded with territorial exclusivity for teams and, by 1891, a constitution that enshrined eight permanent members. New franchises were not absorbed into the National League but instead formed the American League. Underperforming professional baseball teams could not be ejected or relegated to a minor league even if they lost every game. Meanwhile, franchises could relocate to new cities at will.

Other U.S. sports adopted baseball's monopolistic system of fixed teams with all-powerful owners – a system that, by the 21st century, produced regular profits, the world's highest-valued sports teams and absolute power for owners.

In contrast, England's Football League, which began life in 1888, had a fluid membership – exchanging its weakest teams with the strongest teams from the rival Football Alliance to create a two-tier system. The English pyramid system took shape after another rival league was absorbed in 1894 as the third tier.

From the outset there was the possibility of teams moving up – or being promoted – based on their performance on the pitch. Conversely, teams could be demoted if they played badly.

This pyramid structure quickly became the norm for soccer around the world and enshrined in FIFA statutes.

A fans' revolt

Promotions and regulations create drama, romance, season-long tension and fan passion that help make soccer the most popular sport in the world.

But it also terrifies many American owners.

Burnley and West Ham, English clubs with significant American investment, were recently relegated to the second tier of the English pyramid – a move that will likely devastate their budgets and valuations. American-owned Hellas Verona and Pisa in Italy and Girona and Mallorca in Spain were likewise demoted to the second divisions.

Spooked U.S. owners have begun to lobby for change – and the safeguarding of their lucrative sporting investments. And it was little surprise that American fingerprints were all over the April 2021 announcement of the "closed" European Super League. The elite competition would have guaranteed permanent participation for 12 to 15 teams, plus a handful of rotating annual participants, in a new, multibillion-dollar continental competition.

The breakaway league was to be financed with $4 billion from U.S. banking giant JPMorgan. Four of the teams – AC Milan, Arsenal, Liverpool and Manchester United – are American-owned.

The European Super League would have Americanized elite European football in one fell swoop, with fixed franchises, no threat of relegation and league control by the owners or presidents of the permanent teams.

But fans, coaches and former players from the six English Premier League teams involved revolted against an elite competition without relegation, calling it an "ultimate betrayal." All six formally withdrew within 72 hours of the league's announcement, joining Germany's two biggest teams, Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund, which refused from the outset to join. France's Paris Saint-Germain also refused an invitation.

While the effort to create fixed franchises in Europe has, for now, been foiled, Americanization is still happening in smaller steps. Many of the changes are benign, such as cheerleaders and halftime entertainment. Other changes are more profound. American professional sports leagues often tweak rules to increase scoring, and FIFA is now experimenting with a new offside rule that would lead to more goals, reduce major upsets and benefit wealthier clubs.

Todd Boehly, co-owner of the Los Angeles Lakers and Los Angeles Dodgers, Strasbourg FC in France's Ligue 1 and Chelsea in the U.K., is one of the American cheerleaders for this type of change.

He argues that the English Premier League should learn from American sports to increase revenue, including by introducing all-star games and postseason playoffs. Much of this is self-interest: Boehly's Chelsea FC needs all the additional revenue it can find as the club announced record pre-tax losses of US$349 million for the 2024-25 season.

Welcome to … where now?

Some American franchise owners have given up on trying to change the European game and are looking elsewhere. U.S. capital is now being invested in a potential fixed-franchise league in Mexico.

Mexico's first division, Liga MX, whose television viewership in the United States exceeds that of the English Premier League and MLS combined, paused relegations for six seasons in 2020 due to the financial uncertainty brought on by COVID-19. Five of the 18 Liga MX clubs are now American-owned, and a return to relegations looks increasingly unlikely.

Hollywood actor Rob Mac (formerly McElhenney), who co-owns Wrexham FC in the U.K. with Ryan Reynolds, documented the romance of promotions in the TV documentary "Welcome to Wrexham." But as a co-owner, with Eva Longoria, of Liga MX club Necaxa, Mac appears less enamored of the pyramid system in Mexico, pointing out "the potential value and devaluation of the clubs."

Liga MX could soon become the first soccer league to fully transition from an established promotion and relegation system to a fixed-franchise model.

And that would be a significant step toward the global Americanization of the beautiful game.

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. This article is republished under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article at https://theconversation.com.

master1305 / Getty Images

FOCUS

Photos by Eileen T. Meslar / Chicago Tribune / TNS

People run to catch the Green Line train at the Indiana CTA station in the Grand Boulevard neighborhood on June 7, 2026. Charlie Clerk's (aka "Tre") TikTok videos, which show him and other people decked out in costume catching CTA trains in the city, are branded "Catch The Train" and have garnered millions of views.

Dressed as bananas and dinosaurs, these costume-clad Chicagoans have gone viral for chasing CTA trains

By AUDREY PACHUTA
Chicago Tribune (TNS)

CHICAGO — Standing on a second-story Bronzeville balcony Sunday evening, a couple watched from above as the grassy area between their apartment building and the CTA Green Line tracks came to life in a way it never had before.

They saw people of all ages come flocking in costumes: one dressed as an inflatable dinosaur and others as bananas, Michael Jackson and a gingerbread girl. Looking down at the gathering of around 30, they could see smaller groups of people forming, as if they were organizing themselves for a task greater than flaunting unusual wardrobes.

"What in God's name are you doing?" one of the onlookers shouted.

"We're chasing the train," the man dressed as Michael Jackson yelled back.

And so the race began.

It's been a little over two months since 25-year-old Charlie Clerk perfected his social media bit: summoning swarms of costume-clad Chicagoans to run absurd lengths from outside CTA stations toward arriving "L" trains. This spring, the demand for his comedic content skyrocketed, drawing nearly 350,000 followers and video view counts in the millions on his Instagram account, @sidequesttre.

Known by viewers and fellow video participants as "Tre," Clerk said he works tirelessly to choreograph the perfect train chases. So far, his most viral video had more that 70 million views and showed him – dressed as the Grinch and accompanied by his trademark orange dinosaur – chasing down a train at the Orange Line's Halsted station.

Online, his videos look chaotic, but behind the scenes, the project's ringleader spends his free time poring over satellite maps, visiting potential chase sites and crafting the necessary recording angles. Not to mention purchasing an ever-growing number of costumes for those who run with him.

But once he gathers his cast of companions for any given video, he believes preserving authenticity is essential.

"I tell them the vision, I tell them where I want them to be, and then I just leave it at that," Clerk said. "I don't want anyone to ever be overly prepared for what's about to happen."

As a lifelong public transit rider, Clerk is no stranger to the age-old dilemma his account satirizes: being late for the train. In fact, before his videos claimed consistent virality, many of his posts showed him unironically chasing after buses in regular clothes around the city.

Clerk, who lives in Bronzeville, said he always had family ties to Chicago even though he grew up in New Orleans. He hopes his videos bring attention to the benefits of using public transportation to get around and meet new people.

"Tre" aka Charlie Clerk hugs Brooklyn Roper who showed up with others at the Indiana CTA Station in the Grand Boulevard neighborhood on June 7 to be filmed in Clerk's TikTok video running to catch the Green Line train. Clerk's TikTok videos, branded "Catch The Train," have garnered millions of views.

"A lot of places have transit and even more places don't, but it's just so unexplored," Clerk said. "It's such a community of individuals that doesn't need translation."

At Clerk's chases, which he has branded as Catch That Train, 23-year-old Brooklyn Roper can almost always be found in the same costume. A longtime roller skater and content creator, Roper is known by her fellow adventure-seekers as "Banana," a nickname she acquired by wearing the full-body, bright yellow costume she sports in most videos.

When Clerk arrived for Sunday's chase at the Green Line's Indiana and 43rd stops, he introduced himself, handed everyone who had gathered pieces of pool noodles, then walked over to Roper and hugged her.

Roper first joined the crew back in April, when she quickly learned the art of running up flights of train station stairs on wheels. Now, she is part of a small group chat of Clerk's "regular runners," participating in chases that aren't advertised online to the public.

Though she admits racing for trains is somewhat of "an adrenaline thing," she said the best part of Catch That Train has been the tight-knit community she's found because of it.

"It feels like a super group," Roper said. "We're like the Avengers, we just pop up together and show out every single time."

Clerk promoted Sunday's chase online, inviting any of his followers to come out and run, wearing FIFA World Cup-related costumes. As his profile has grown, he said it's important to find stations that are more accessible for large groups and slower runners.

Before each chase begins, Clerk tries to establish a rapport with the CTA employees on-site. Most times, he and the other runners "pre-tap" to pay their fare, allowing them to keep the handicap door open for an extended period of time. Sometimes, he said, the group "runs into issues" with CTA operators who are skeptical of the chaos, but for the most part, the employees he's met have been supportive.

"You can't really stop us from running to catch the train like everyone else in the world," he said.

Out of respect for other riders and with the safety of his fellow runners in mind, Clerk said he often picks stops off the Green and Pink lines – where there is less traffic and more space to run – for his larger chases. The CTA did not respond to a request for comment.

Beneath the Green Line station on Sunday, Clerk separated the larger group into smaller clusters based on aesthetics and ability, then approached each of them to describe their unique role. Toward the front of the pack closest to the station, a group of children joined in on the festivities, and some of the more seasoned train chasers started to dance with them.

For Walt Verdun, the 23-year-old man dressed as Michael Jackson, these moments before and after train chases are often the most memorable.

"I love being around people who just want to enjoy life and be free," he said. "We're not talking about anything negative, we're not doing anything negative, we're just really bringing the community together."

Verdun joined the squad of regular runners when Clerk posted online a few months ago, hoping to find as many Michael Jackson impersonators as possible to chase a train with him. No one else showed up, but for Verdun, the opportunity was the start of something deeply transformative.

"I don't really have friends at all, (I'm) by myself a lot," he said. "And I really feel like these guys are my true friends now."

Like Verdun, 37-year-old Terrisa Scott, who wears her own gingerbread girl costume during chases, has relished the chance to step outside her comfort zone. When creating videos, Scott said, even the "OG runners" call each other by their costume names, rather than their real ones.

For her, being able to join the train-chasing community has served as the perfect opportunity to step outside her job in the pathology department at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

"If work is stressful, that's fine," Scott said. "I know I have to go out later and catch the train."

What began as a small-scale social media project that allowed Clerk's followers to join in has quickly grown into something bigger. They've increasingly demanded him to expand his videos to other cities, he said, prompting him to take solo trips to New York and Philadelphia earlier this spring to chase trains there.

Between the travel, costumes and other expenses, he said maintaining his account has become expensive and time-consuming around his 9-to-5 job in healthcare administration.

Despite the added stress, Clerk said there is one thing that will always make his efforts worth it: the responses he's received from those watching his videos. Over the last few months, he said he's heard from parents of children with autism who love his videos, and also from those experiencing tough times who feel uplifted by his posts.

Clerk said these messages are particularly meaningful to him after he lost his 18-year-old brother, Corey Adams, who died in a Tennessee shooting last summer.

"I know how hard it is for me to smile, or for me to shake myself out of those bad situations," Clerk said. "And for somebody who may be experiencing something similar to me and feel strong enough or passionately enough to reach out and let me know, that's worth more than any $5 contribution."

HEALTH

ASK THE PEDIATRICIAN

Finding mental healthcare for your child

By SARAH ADAMS MD, FAAP
American Academy of Pediatrics (TNS)

Healthy mental and emotional development is vital for a healthy childhood. Today, children and teens are dealing with sources of stress that most parents never imagined.

Over the past few years, they've had to adjust to ever-changing routines and expectations at home, at school, and in their real-life and online interactions. It has become even more important for parents and caregivers to be aware of their children's mental and emotional needs and know how to support them.

During difficult emotional times, you can show support in a variety of ways. This includes creating a space for your child to talk with you as you listen, and taking your child's words and feelings seriously. Providing a safe, stable and nurturing environment for your child and teen in an environment that is predictable and loving allows them to better respond to the stress they may experience.

All children face life changes, but the impacts may vary for each child. Sometimes you and your child or teen may need additional support to handle life's challenges. A trained professional can work with you and your child or teen to develop a plan to improve your child's mental and emotional health.

One of the best places to start is with your child's pediatrician. They are trained to take care of every aspect of your child's health, including their emotional and mental health. Your child's pediatrician can help you identify areas of concern that need additional support early on, and what type of mental health provider is best based on the child's symptoms and behaviors. They can work with you to identify a plan for supporting your child's mental and emotional health needs and provide a list of mental health professionals in your current insurance network.

Schools have a wealth of resources available to support social-emotional learning. The classroom teacher may reach out to you when they notice changes in your child's attention, focus or response to other students. Additionally, support personnel such as school social workers, therapists and counselors can work with your child's pediatrician to develop a school support plan.

Counselors may also be able to provide referrals to free or reduced-cost local providers. In some cases, they may provide services such as grief support to your child during the school day. Some schools also sponsor the Rainbows for All Children program that provides grief support for children.

They say raising a child takes a village. If you have helpers in your life, turn to them. It's likely that many of your friends and family members have dealt with mental and emotional health issues themselves or with their own children. They may be able to recommend their own therapist or one in their therapist's network. Trusted friends and relatives may work with you to provide additional support for your child to promote positive childhood experiences. A first-hand review of a healthcare provider's style can help your decision-making process. It is helpful to have friends and family support you on the journey to improve your child's mental health.

It may take a while to find a provider and schedule an appointment. If your child shows symptoms of severe mental and emotional distress or suicidal thoughts, reach out to a medical professional right away. Call your local hospital, or, if necessary, take your child to the emergency department.

Insurance coverage for mental health providers can become tricky. If you have private insurance, you may have to use its network providers. Contact your provider to get a list of in-network therapists and to confirm your mental health coverage. Before scheduling an appointment, it is best to know in advance how many sessions are covered, what percentage of the cost is covered, and whether there is a co-payment.

If your family does not have a medical plan that covers mental health, there are many local clinics that provide referrals and free or reduced-cost mental health services. Your county health department is a valuable resource in this area.

Finding the right healthcare professional takes time. On paper, a therapist may have the right credentials and great references. What matters is how the therapist connects with your child. For a child to learn and grow, they have to feel comfortable and be willing to talk and trust the provider. You may have to try a few therapists to find the right fit.

Treatment plans are not one-size-fits-all. Your provider will talk with you, your child, and, possibly, the school to come to a proper diagnosis. From there, they will work with you to create a treatment plan to meet your child's needs. Listen to what the therapist suggests, ask questions and be open to possible changes to the treatment plan.

Once treatment begins, give it time to work. If medicine is prescribed, it may take weeks or months to find the right dosage or one that provides the right impact.

Because you begin with one therapist does not mean you need to stay with them. It may take time to find a healthcare provider who is a good fit for your child and their needs. Also, if you are not comfortable or sure about the diagnosis or the treatment plan, it's OK to seek a second opinion. You may want to consider changing providers if your child hesitates more than usual to talk with the provider or has shared negative feedback about the provider with you. You may also want to consider seeking a different provider if your child's overall outlook doesn't seem to be improving. However, keep in mind that it may take time for the provider to build trust and a connection with your child, and that most behavioral treatments take time.

Remember, many children are going through the very same issues as your child. Mental and emotional health is no different from physical health. If your child had asthma, you wouldn't hesitate to get them an inhaler or albuterol treatments. If your child had diabetes, you would make sure they had insulin shots and a glucose meter. By meeting your child's mental and emotional needs and connecting your child with a professional therapist, you are helping them take an active role in their own treatment.

While treating your child's mental health, don't forget about your own. By taking care of your mental and emotional health, you increase opportunities for your child to have positive, resilience-building experiences with you. There are parent support groups through the National Alliance on Mental Illness, your local hospital and some faith communities. You are not alone on this journey.

Sarah Adams, MD, FAAP, is a pediatrician and national spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics. She also hosts the podcast Growing Up with Dr. Sarah, where she shares practical, evidence-based guidance to support children's health and well-being.

Summer between high school graduation and college is a critical time for preventing risky behaviors – *here's how parents can play a key role*

By BEVERLY KINGSTON
University of Colorado Boulder
and CLARA HILL
Washington State University
(The Conversation)

Early summer is a valuable time for parents and young people to prepare for the transition to college in the fall.

As first-year college students arrive on campus every fall, a predictable pattern unfolds. Rates of heavy drinking spike, social pressures intensify, and the risk of sexual assault, injury and other harms increases.

Many parents feel trepidation about their teens navigating this landscape of opportunity and risk. And unfortunately, too often, students don't receive guidance from schools or caregivers as they make this major life transition.

Research suggests that the summer before college can be a critical window to help students prepare for the social and emotional realities they are about to face, and to reduce risks before they begin. And parents and caregivers can play a key role.

We are a sociologist and a research scientist, and each of us studies different aspects of prevention science.

When we went to college in the 1980s and early 2000s, the dominant message to families was to step back and let students figure things out on their own, and we struggled to adjust. Looking back, we wish our families had received clear guidance and resources for how to stay connected and support us during this transition.

A perfect storm

While students may legally be adults when they leave for college, key parts of the brain – particularly those involved in judgment, impulse control, emotional regulation and decision-making – are still developing well into their mid-20s. At the same time, the parts of the brain tied to reward, emotion and social belonging are especially sensitive during this stage of life.

This combination can make young people more likely to prioritize immediate rewards, peer acceptance and emotional reactions over careful assessments of risk – especially in environments with fewer guardrails and greater access to alcohol and other drugs.

Students are also navigating enormous change: separation from family, pressure to fit in, loneliness, uncertainty and the challenge of building a new identity and social network. Even positive transitions such as moving or getting a new job can create significant stress.

Many students turn to alcohol and other substances to manage stress, reduce anxiety and navigate social belonging in environments where substance use is often normalized – or even expected.

Unfortunately, substance use impairs judgment, increases impulsivity and amplifies vulnerability to a range of other high-risk behaviors and harms. And this struggle, as one of us, Beverly Kingston, experienced, can be more than a phase.

The risks are real, but they can be addressed

The spike in drinking and other risky behaviors during the transition to college is not inevitable. And parents and other adults in young peoples' lives matter during this developmental transition to adulthood, more than many realize.

For instance, research clearly shows that parents' attitudes and norms around drinking play a big role in how their children engage with alcohol, both as teens and in adulthood. When students believe their parents are permissive about alcohol, they are more likely to drink and binge-drink.

Even well-intended efforts to encourage "safe" drinking send the wrong message. Many parents believe letting teens drink at home in a supervised environment is safer, but decades of research in the U.S. and internationally show that this unintentionally signals to teens that drinking is acceptable and contributes to higher alcohol use later on.

Yet when parents communicate clear expectations and have honest conversations about alcohol, it can reduce risk and support healthier decision-making. Conversations about binge drinking, peer pressure, stress and decision-making can help students navigate environments where alcohol use is often normalized.

One of us, Clara Hill, works on research related to a tool for navigating these conversations, a parent handbook called "First Years Away from Home: Letting Go and Staying Connected." In a randomized clinical trial, the most rigorous type of research study available, students whose parents used this handbook during the summer before college were significantly less likely to start or increase substance use during their first semester.

However, the focus of the handbook is not only on substance use. It also serves as a tool kit to guide parents in talking to their young adults about values, expectations and relationships.

Support, not surveillance

Many students say they want their parents involved in their lives – just not overly involved. They want emotional connection, guidance and support while also being trusted to grow into independent young adults.

To achieve this balance, parents may find it helpful to think of themselves as holding three important roles during the college years. These roles are the cheerleader, who provides emotional support; the coach, who supports autonomy by helping students clarify their values and problem-solve; and the safety monitor, who communicates clear expectations around issues of potential harm and checks in about health and risk behaviors.

Different scenarios – roommate conflicts, poor grades, mental health struggles – will call for parents to embody new parenting roles during this time, distinct from what children needed during adolescence or childhood.

Support can begin with honest conversations before students ever arrive on campus. Parents can talk with their students about stress, loneliness, belonging, alcohol and substance use, relationships, values, stress and how to respond when things do not go as planned.

Looking back, both of us entered college carrying expectations and fears we did not fully understand. When the transition became harder than expected, it fell to us to navigate loneliness, uncertainty and the pressure to fit in.

Finding the right balance

Parents, too, often feel adrift; they want to help, but may receive mixed messages from the media and from colleges about how much they should be involved in their new college student's life.

Feeling pressure to optimize their young adult children's success, while also being cautioned against "helicopter parenting," can lead parents to step back more than necessary when it comes to offering guidance and support.

Today, researchers know much more about what helps young people navigate this major life transition and thrive. Students do not stop needing support when they leave home, and parents do not have to disappear in the name of independence; parents can lovingly support young adults' growing autonomy.

When students are surrounded by connection, guidance and support, the transition to college can be healthier, safer and less overwhelming. And the time to begin building that support is before students ever arrive on campus.

Beverly Kingston is director and senior research associate at the University of Colorado Boulder's Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence. Clara Hill is a research associate in human development at Washington State University.

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. This article is republished under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article at https://theconversation.com.

Dianne Gralnickvia Getty Images

MAYO CLINIC Q&A

Dreamstime / TNS

While many people associate menopause with hot flashes and changes in periods, it can also influence several aspects of long-term health. These effects can vary from person to person, but they also are a common part of aging.

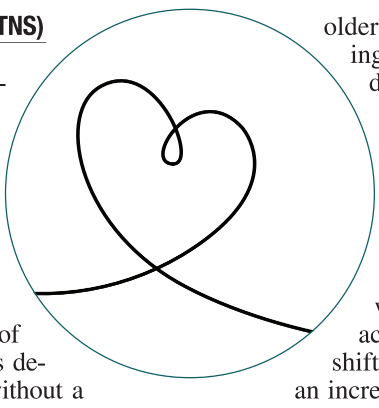
How menopause affects heart, brain and bone health

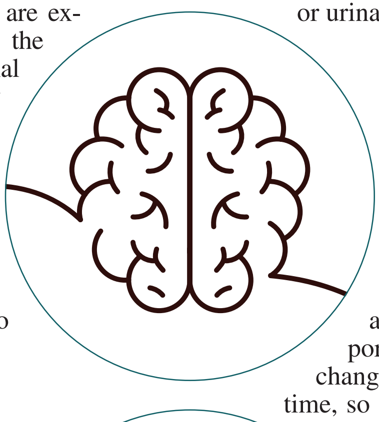
By MAYO CLINIC NEWS NETWORK (TNS)

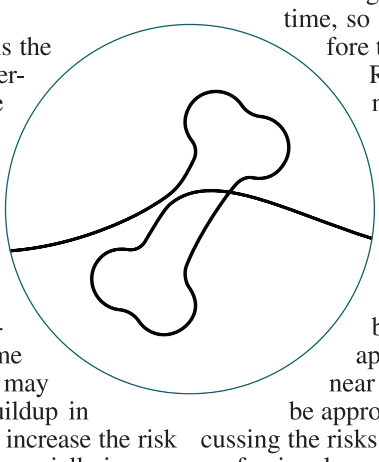
DEAR MAYO CLINIC: My older sister recently went through menopause and was surprised to learn it could affect more than periods and cause hot flashes. What should women know about these changes to heart, brain and bone health as we get older?

ANSWER: Menopause is a natural transition that marks the end of a woman's reproductive years. It's defined as 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period. However, there are exceptions. Procedures that affect the uterus or certain types of hormonal birth control can stop monthly bleeding, even if menopause has not yet occurred.

While many people associate menopause with hot flashes and changes in periods, it can also influence several aspects of long-term health. These effects can vary from person to person, but they also are a common part of aging.







Hormones

A key reason for these changes is the decline in estrogen and progesterone – hormones that play a role in many systems throughout the body. As levels decrease, these changes don't happen overnight; rather, they develop gradually over time.

Estrogen helps support healthy blood vessels and cholesterol levels. As levels decline during menopause, blood vessels may become less flexible and cholesterol levels may rise, which can lead to plaque buildup in blood vessels. These changes may increase the risk of heart disease after menopause, especially in people who have other risk factors.

Many women notice changes in memory, focus or mood during menopause. Symptoms such as "brain fog," difficulty finding words or forgetfulness are common and can be linked to hormonal changes, sleep disruption and stress.

In most cases, these changes are mild and may come and go. However, symptoms that are persistent, worsening or noticeable to others may need further evaluation. These can include difficulty following conversations, getting lost in familiar places or changes in thinking or behavior.

Bone health is another important consideration. Estrogen helps maintain bone density and strength, and as levels decline, the body loses bone more quickly than it can rebuild it. Over time, this can lead to lower bone density and an increased risk of fractures.

Bone loss often begins around menopause and can continue for several years. Risk factors include older age, a smaller body frame, smoking, inactivity, certain medical conditions and use of some medications. Screening can help identify changes early, since bone loss often occurs without noticeable symptoms.

Menopause can affect daily life in ways that aren't always immediately recognized. Some women experience fatigue, joint aches, weight or skin changes, or shifts in sex drive. There may also be an increased risk of metabolic conditions or urinary tract infections.

Treatment and care

Healthy habits can make a meaningful difference before, during and after menopause. Regular physical activity, including cardiovascular and weight-bearing exercise, and a balanced diet can help support overall health. Prioritizing sleep, avoiding tobacco and limiting alcohol also are important. Small, consistent lifestyle changes can have a lasting effect over time, so it's best to start making them before transitioning to menopause.

Routine checkups are an opportunity to share your symptoms and concerns. Your healthcare team can help guide next steps, including monitoring risk factors and deciding when screenings or treatments are appropriate.

Hormone therapy may help manage symptoms and support bone and heart health. This therapy is most effective when started near the time of menopause and may be appropriate for certain people after discussing the risks and benefits with their healthcare professional.

Nonhormonal options also are available for those who are at risk of hormone-related complications or prefer not taking hormones. Medications and lifestyle approaches are available to address symptoms like hot flashes, vaginal dryness and sleep disturbances.

Menopause is more than a change in menstrual cycles. It's a shift that affects multiple aspects of your health. With education and discussions with a healthcare professional, women can make informed decisions about preventive care and treatment options to support their health during menopause.

– Amy Hagen, C.N.P., Obstetrics & Gynecology, Mayo Clinic Health System, Mankato, Minnesota

Brain: cnythzl via Getty Images
Heart: Dimitris66 via Getty Images
Bone: Sviatlana Herasimenka via Getty Images

Menopause is a natural transition that marks the end of a woman's reproductive years. It's defined as 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period. However, there are exceptions. Procedures that affect the uterus or certain types of hormonal birth control can stop monthly bleeding, even if menopause has not yet occurred. While many people associate menopause with hot flashes and changes in periods, it can also influence several aspects of long-term health. These effects can vary from person to person, but they also are a common part of aging.

Recognize the sudden warning signs of stroke – *and BE FAST*

By MAYO CLINIC NEWS NETWORK (TNS)

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Stroke remains a leading cause of serious disability and death in the U.S., but recognizing symptoms quickly and seeking immediate medical attention can dramatically improve outcomes. Mayo Clinic experts emphasize that knowing the warning signs of stroke and acting fast can save brain function and lives.

"Time is brain when it comes to stroke treatment," says Josephine Huang M.D., a Mayo Clinic neurologist. "The sooner a person receives medical care, the greater the chance of reducing long-term disability and improving recovery."

Stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is disrupted, either by a blockage in an artery or by bleeding in the brain. Mayo Clinic experts say both types of stroke require immediate medical evaluation because prompt treatment can significantly improve recovery and reduce long-term disability.

Symptoms

Stroke symptoms often appear suddenly and may include facial drooping, arm or leg weakness, slurred speech, language difficulty, vision problems, dizziness or loss of balance. Mayo Clinic experts encourage the public to remember the acronym BE FAST:

- **B** – Balance: Sudden onset of loss of balance or coordination.
- **E** – Eyes: Sudden vision problems or loss of vision in one or both eyes.
- **F** – Face drooping: One side of the face appears uneven or numb.
- A – Arm weakness: Sudden weakness or numbness in one arm.
- **S** – Speech difficulty: Trouble speaking or understanding speech.
- **T** – Time to call 911: Immediate medical attention is critical.

Treatment

Rapid treatment can restore blood flow to the brain and reduce permanent damage. Mayo Clinic experts stress that emergency evaluation should begin as soon as symptoms appear, not after they worsen or disappear. If a stroke is caused by a blood clot, doctors may use clot-busting medications or perform minimally invasive procedures to remove the clot and reopen blocked blood vessels in the brain.

"These are what we call endovascular procedures," says Dr. Huang. "Doctors thread a guidewire through a blood vessel to remove the clot and restore blood flow to the brain."

For hemorrhagic strokes caused by bleeding in the brain, treatment focuses on controlling blood pressure, reversing blood-thinning medications if needed, and sometimes relieving pressure on the brain surgically.

Prevention

Certain risk factors can increase stroke risk, including high blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, obesity, high cholesterol, sedentary lifestyle and atrial fibrillation. Mayo Clinic experts note that nearly 90 percent of strokes may be preventable through risk factor management and healthy lifestyle changes.

Experts encourage regular health screenings, physical activity and healthy eating habits to help lower stroke risk. "Identifying these risk factors and making sure they are treated appropriately goes a long way toward preventing stroke from happening in the first place," says Dr. Huang.

Dreamstime / TNS

Mayo Clinic experts emphasize that knowing the warning signs of stroke and acting fast can save brain function and lives.

Get **more** out of your muscles *with these two nutrients*

By KARL HILLE
The Baltimore Sun (TNS)

Whether you're playing chess, playing center field or performing on stage, your body draws energy from tiny organelles within each cell called mitochondria, the powerhouse of the cell. But until recently, scientists have not fully understood exactly how cells sense and use nutrients to support mitochondrial function.

A study from the University of Cologne in Germany reveals that a common dietary amino acid, leucine, protects mitochondrial proteins, improving their performance. Another paper from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York explores how vitamin B12 improves mitochondrial function in muscle and helps preserve muscle mass as people age.

Leucine is an essential amino acid that the body cannot produce. It is commonly found in protein-rich foods, such as meat, dairy, beans and lentils. A team led by Qiaochu Li at the University of Cologne's Institute for Genetics found that leucine preserves proteins on the outer surface of mitochondria. Those proteins help transport molecules into the organelle to support energy production. This allows the cell to meet increased energy demands from hard work or exercise.

"We were thrilled to discover that a cell's nutrient status, especially its leucine levels, directly impacts energy production," Li told ScienceDaily in May. "This mechanism enables cells to swiftly adapt to increased energy demands during periods of nutrient abundance."

They published their findings in Nature Cell Biology.

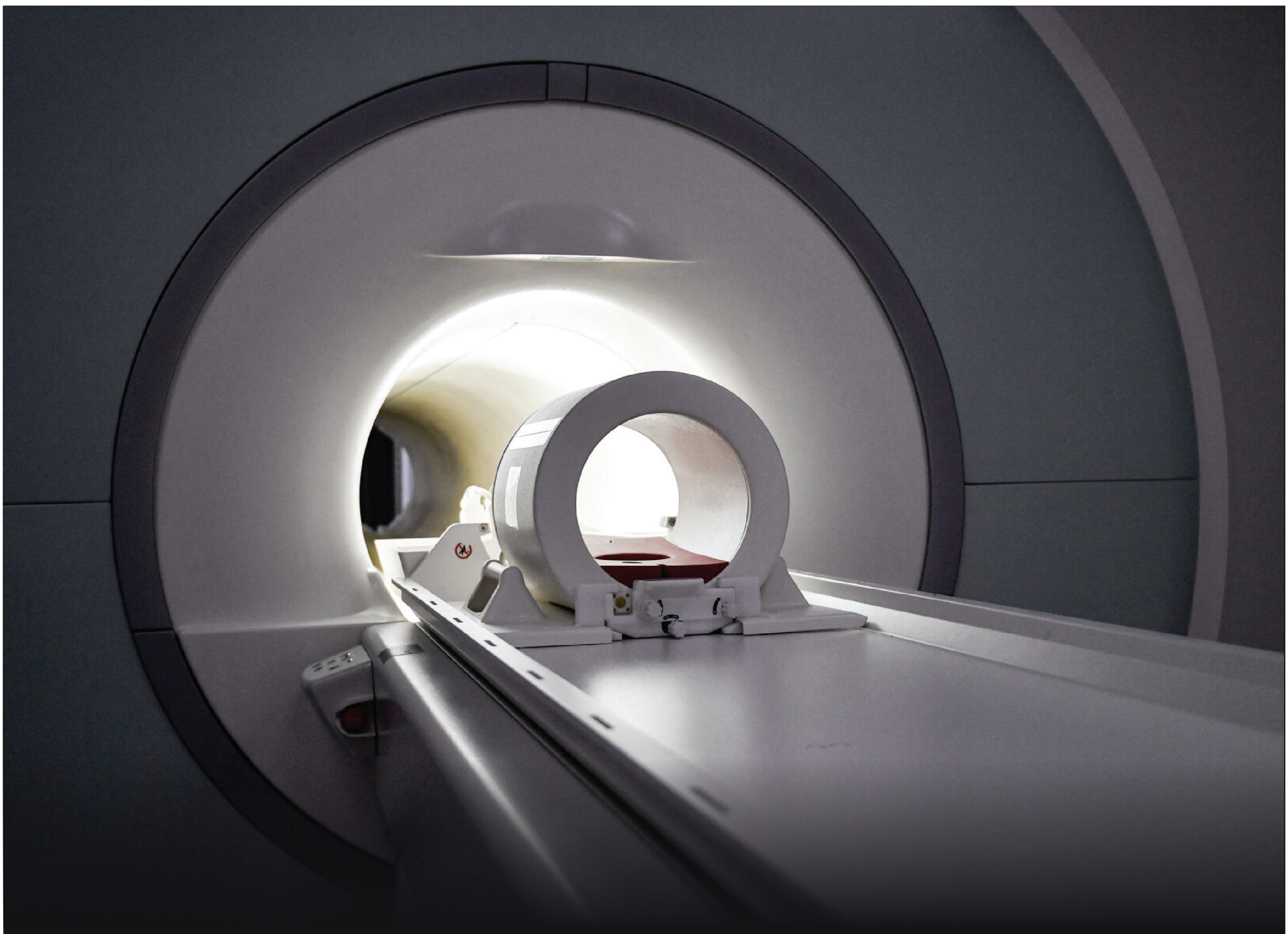
Vitamin B12 may shape metabolism and aging

Vitamin B12 appears to influence how the body maintains muscle mass and produces energy,

Cornell researchers found that vitamin B12 appears to support efficient mitochondria function, in addition to its known role in nerve and red blood cell health.

B12 supports cellular metabolism, giving muscles power, and helps reveal nutritional deficiencies before an older person starts losing muscle mass.

Their research confirmed that B12 supplements helped aging mice improve mitochondrial function in their muscles. Their study, published in the Journal of Nutrition in March, also tied deficiency to lower muscle mass and strength.



Alain Jocard / AFP / Getty Images / TNS

A magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine at Neurospin in Gif-sur-Yvette, southwest of Paris, in 2021.

WHAT IS 'SCANXIETY'?

What to know about anxiety caused by medical testing

By NIAMH ORDNER
The Dallas Morning News (TNS)

DALLAS — For many patients, anxiety can start long before testing. Their stomach may twist in knots in the days leading up to the appointment, and nervousness can persist even while waiting for results.

Ruminating on anxious thoughts can cause patients to fixate on the worst possible outcomes and quickly lead to snowballing. The thought process and creeping sense of dread are more common than people might expect, so much so that it even has its own name: scanxiety.

Ruminating on anxious thoughts can cause patients to fixate on the worst possible outcomes and quickly lead to snowballing. The thought process and creeping sense of dread are more common than people might expect, so much so that it even has its own name: scanxiety.

What is scanxiety?

Scan-related anxiety, or scanxiety for short, is the distress or nervousness caused by medical testing, such as a scan, and the uncertainties and fears that accompany it.

"It's the anxiety which comes from not only going through the procedure, but also wondering what the scan is going to be like, what the scan is for and having to wait to get the results," said Laura Howe-Martin, the medical director of psycho-oncology at the UT Southwestern Simmons Cancer Center.

"Anxiety is already a normal human experience," Howe-Martin said. "When we put someone in a situation where there is some sort of waiting period and there's a big unknown, their brain has a really hard time dealing with that, especially when the outcomes of those tests could be very life-threatening."

Scanxiety can result from any medical condition that requires a lot of surveillance, but it is most common among cancer patients. A 2021 study surveyed 222 patients with different types of cancer and found that 55 percent of them experienced scanxiety. Research studies attribute this frequency to the high stakes of cancer treatment, namely the fear and uncertainty associated with what results might mean for a patient's disease status and treatment.

Feelings of anxiety can be prompted by different parts of the scan experience, such as unfamiliar tech and equipment, discomfort or claustrophobia from enclosed spaces, and that worry can compound as patients wait for high-stakes, health-related news, Howe-Martin said in a news release.

The most anxiety-inducing parts of testing may differ. A 2017 study surveyed 81 cancer patients and found that 79 percent were most anxious about the results, while 12 percent were most anxious about the scan procedure. Following testing, 87 percent reported being most anxious about the scan results.

Many patients also experience anxiety due to the potential long-term effects of surveillance scans. In the 2012-13 Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS), 73 percent of surveyed cancer survivors in the United States reported at least some worry about the effects of radiation from surveillance scans, and 16 percent reported a lot of worry.

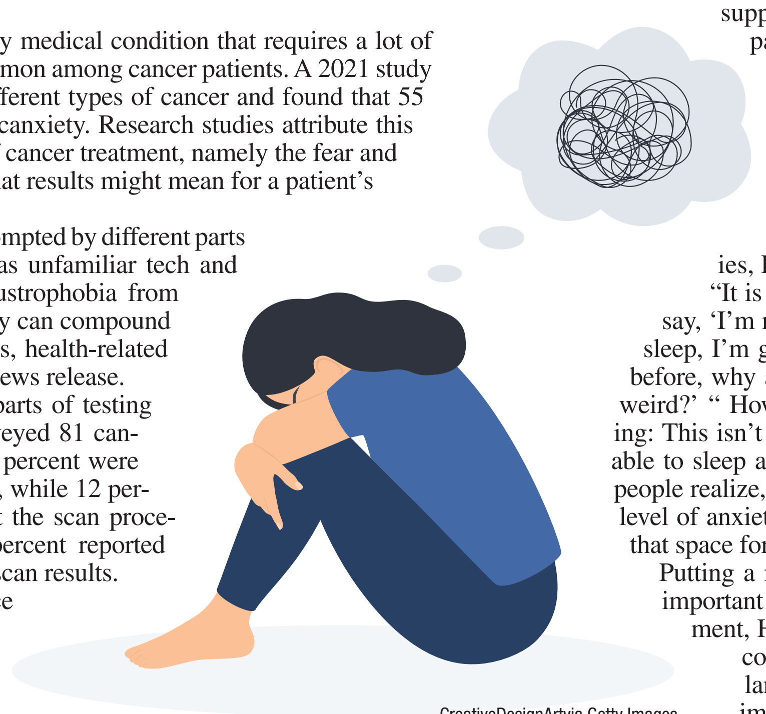
How to recognize scanxiety

Scanxiety can manifest in many ways, including waves of feeling overwhelmed, panicked or depressed, insomnia or sleep disruptions, irritability, jitteriness or fidgeting, racing heart and sweaty palms, tension in the shoulders and neck, and upset stomach or digestive issues, Howe-Martin said in the news release.

These symptoms can be worsened by a fear of hospitals or clinics, unclear communication between patients and healthcare providers, not knowing what to expect at a healthcare appointment and previous poor experiences with healthcare. Scanxiety is especially prevalent among those who suffer from anxiety, or have a history of anxiety, Howe-Martin said.

How to treat scanxiety

Turning off health-related notifications on patient portals, prioritizing self-care, practicing mindfulness and leaning on support networks are all strategies that can help alleviate feelings of anxiety, Howe-Martin said in the news release. Mental health professionals such as psycho-oncologists – who are trained to provide emotional support to cancer patients – can work with patients to develop proactive strategies to help cope when anxiety becomes overwhelming.



CreativeDesignArtvia Getty Images

Patients with scanxiety are advised to seek information about future procedures and to talk with their doctor about the tests they need, as this reduces unknowns and can help calm anxieties, Howe-Martin said.

"It is very common for patients to come in and say, 'I'm nervous about my upcoming scans, I can't sleep, I'm getting snappy with people. I've done this before, why am I freaking out?' And they say, 'Is that weird?' " Howe-Martin said. "Normalizing it and saying: This isn't going to last forever, you are going to be able to sleep again, you will move forward – that helps people realize, especially if they haven't had that intense level of anxiety before, that they're not going to stay in that space forever."

Putting a name to this type of anxiety is especially important because it helps prevent a lot of self-judgement, Howe-Martin said. For patients living with conditions that require long-term surveillance, that reassurance can make a notable impact.

FINANCE

Dreamstime / TNS

"As the U.S. population ages and the largest wealth transfer in history unfolds, older Americans are increasingly being targeted for financial exploitation – often with devastating consequences," said the Washington, D.C.-based American Bankers Association in a statement.

A lifetime of savings lost

How elder financial exploitation is challenging banks and families

By TIM GRANT
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (TNS)

Just months before she died at age 101, Phyllis Hood was facing a prospect she never imagined possible – running out of money.

The longtime Beaver County, Pennsylvania, nurse had spent decades caring for others. She lived frugally, attended Presbyterian church faithfully and saved diligently for retirement, her family said.

Yet, by early 2026, Hood was just three or four months from not being able to pay for her room and board at Franciscan Manor, an assisted living facility in Beaver Falls. The reason, according to court records, was not poor financial planning or a market downturn.

It was theft.

A caregiver Hood lived with and trusted allegedly stole more than $230,000 from her bank account, draining much of the savings she worked a lifetime to accumulate, even as she became frail and vulnerable in her final years. Hood moved in with Anna Kugel, the caregiver named in the court documents, in October 2023 and had been receiving a salary of $1,400 a month to care for her.

"In January of 2025, my sister and I, with the help of the Beaver County Office of Aging, went to where Aunt Phyllis was living and moved Phyllis and whatever belongings she had left to the facility where she now resides," Hood's niece, Lindsey Finken, 61, wrote this spring in a victim impact statement.

On April 29, Kugel, 46, of Beaver County, was sentenced to five months of house arrest and seven years of probation after pleading guilty to charges related to the theft of Hood's money. She also was ordered to repay $100,000 in restitution to Hood through monthly payments of $250.

Hood died on May 27 at Franciscan Manor. Kugel did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

What happened to her is not an isolated case. As Americans live longer and accumulate more wealth, financial exploitation has become one of the fastest growing threats facing older adults.

"As the U.S. population ages and the largest wealth transfer in history unfolds, older Americans are increasingly being targeted for financial exploitation – often with devastating consequences," said the Washington, D.C.-based American Bankers Association in a statement.

"Banks are on the front lines of this challenge," the ABA said, "making significant investments in employee training, account monitoring and safeguards designed to detect suspicious activity and protect vulnerable customers."

Looking for subtle warning signs

Unlike many financial crimes, elder financial exploitation frequently unfolds in plain sight.

The perpetrators are often caregivers, relatives or other trusted friends and individuals who gradually gain access to bank accounts, credit cards or financial records. By the time suspicious transactions are discovered, much of the money may already be gone.

Bankers look for subtle warning signs that something isn't right, but spotting potential elder financial exploitation means walking a fine line between protecting older customers and respecting their right to control their own money.

A red flag is large cash withdrawals, according to Erik Fuhr, branch manager at Dollar Bank in Cranberry, Pennsylvania. He said tellers and branch managers will often ask casual questions to better understand the purpose of the withdrawal.

"We might ask questions such as, 'Are we making a big purchase?' or 'Are we going away for the weekend?' to see if we can get the customer to open up a little bit," Fuhr said. "While we're doing that, we're looking at the history on the account to see if it's typical account activity."

In one case, Fuhr said, an elderly customer came into a branch wanting to withdraw $8,000 – most of the money in the account.

"That was red flag No. 1," he said.

The customer's body language appeared uneasy and the explanations for needing the money changed during conversations with bank employees.

Initially, the customer said the money was for a fence, but could not provide an invoice or explain the exact amount. Later the customer gave another employee a different reason for the withdrawal.

"We ended up refusing the withdrawal at that time because we were convinced this person was being taken advantage of," Fuhr said.

A few days later, the customer returned to the branch – with a message of gratitude.

"They said we saved them a lot of money in that scenario," Fuhr said.

While Hood dealt with a different bank, her family believes the warning signs in her aunt's case should have drawn attention.

According to Finken, the lion's share of the money disappeared through repeated cash withdrawals over a relatively short period.

"This woman went to the bank every couple of days and was just withdrawing," Finken said. "She withdrew most of the money in a short period – like a nine-month timeframe – in big chunks of $10,000, $25,000, $5,000 and $3,000.

"The bank just let it happen, never questioning the rapidness and the number of times," she said.

The Financial Exploitation Prevention Act

The financial services industry is backing legislation aimed at protecting elderly and vulnerable people from being exploited.

Financial institutions say one reason elder exploitation can be difficult to stop is that suspicious transactions often involve authorized account holders or people who have been granted legal authority over an account.

The proposed Financial Exploitation Prevention Act, now making its way through Congress, would allow registered investment companies, including mutual funds, to delay the disbursement of money from the sale of shares if financial exploitation is expected. The delay would give firms time to contact the account owner or a trusted contact person to verify that the transaction is legitimate.

But some financial advisers say they already have the power to pause the sale of stock and investigate transactions that appear unusual or inconsistent with the client's normal behavior.

"If somebody was truly acting out of character and they asked me to do something that I did not feel was in their best interest, or I had any type of inclination they were being exploited, I can just refuse to act on it," said Matt Yanni, owner of Yanni & Associates Investment Advisors in Pine.

"But the other part of this is you getting to know the client, and important people in their lives. If something comes up, you can always talk to them."

In recent years, major brokerage firms including Charles Schwab and others have begun requiring older clients to designate a "trusted contact" on their accounts.

"It doesn't give the trusted contact the ability to see everything in the account," Yanni said.

"But if the client starts acting out of the ordinary, if they come out of the blue to me and say they've met someone online and they need a couple hundred thousands, that person would be our contact."

'I see no justice here'

For Finken and her sister Beverly Shay, the most painful part of their ordeal is that the person who emptied out much of their aunt's life savings wasn't a stranger.

Kugel had known Hood since childhood, they said. Their families were close. When Hood signed a power of attorney in October 2022, giving Kugel control over her finances, Finken said she believed she was entrusting her affairs to someone who would protect her best interests.

The losses included not only Hood's personal savings, but also an inheritance she received after the death of one of her sons.

By the time Finken and Shay became directly involved in January 2025 – after the Beaver County Office of Aging received an anonymous tip that Hood might be the victim of exploitation – much of the money was gone.

Hood had already seen more than her share of hardship. Widowed for 25 years, she raised three children and helped raise a grandson. Two of her sons died before she did. Her surviving daughter uses a wheelchair and lives in another care facility.

What remained of her assets was the proceeds from the sale of Hood's Beaver County home – about $100,000 that would have to stretch as far as possible.

"We had to be very frugal towards the end," Finken said.

The facility where Hood spent her final months charged about $7,500 a month. Her income totaled about $1,900 a month from Social Security and a couple of small pensions. Family members said she actually needed more care than they could afford, but additional aides would have cost roughly another $4,000 a month.

"We couldn't buy extra aides to come in and support her," Finken said. "We had to just pay her monthly fees and insurance premiums."

The nieces say the money that was stolen was supposed to provide comfort and dignity for Hood in her final years. But what angers them the most is their feeling that Kugel's punishment doesn't compare with the damage that was done.

"We were encouraged to make her house arrest shorter so that she would be able to work and make payments sooner," Finken said.

In her victim statement, Finken told the court that the sentence falls short of justice.

"Anna Shee Kugel personified a clear, calculated and manipulative predator and needs to sit in jail for a long time or be obligated to get a job in which she can pay back much more than $250 a month," she wrote.

"Otherwise, I see no justice here."

FOOD

These gluten-free meatballs feature beef, spinach and feta

By GRETCHEN MCKAY
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (TNS)

Young or old, it's the rare diner who is not in the mood for meatballs.

A versatile dish that spans many cultures and can be made with beef, pork, chicken or even plant-based ingredients, meatballs are great as a standalone dish on top of rice or noodles, tucked into a pita or stuffed into a roll as a sub.

The only problem is that if they're made with lean meat or you overwork the balls while shaping them, they can fall apart during cooking – or worse, taste dry instead of moist and juicy.

Many meatball recipes bind the mixture and add tenderness with eggs and breadcrumbs or bread soaked in milk. But it's OK to play around with other ingredients that will add that much-wanted moisture without making meatballs overly wet or fragile. For instance, try finely grated vegetables like zucchini, carrots and mushrooms, panko, ricotta cheese, yogurt or tomato paste.

In this recipe, chopped frozen spinach, which is naturally high in moisture, is used to bind the meat. The trick is you have to wring it out really, really well using a clean dish towel after it thaws to make sure not even a drop of liquid remains. The addition of feta, especially if you take time to grate it, also helps create a more cohesive texture since it melts – slightly – during cooking.

These meatballs are seasoned with lots of garlic powder and dried oregano, but feel free to substitute fresh grated garlic if that's your thing. They're served with a bright and lemony yogurt sauce punctuated with dill.

They can be served hot out of the oven, warm or at room temperature, with the sauce drizzled on top. If you need a good office lunch, tuck them into pita bread with lettuce and tomato for a Greek-style meatball sandwich.

I made them in my oven, but you also could cook the meatballs in an air fryer at 400 degrees for 15 minutes, turning halfway through.

Beef, Spinach and Feta Meatballs
Serves 2-4

FOR MEATBALLS:
10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, defrosted and squeezed dry
1/4 pound (about 1 cup) crumbled feta cheese
1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon dried oregano
Kosher salt
1 pound ground beef
Cooking spray

FOR SAUCE:
1 cup plain full-fat Greek yogurt
2 small cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
Juice and zest of 1 lemon
Kosher salt, to taste
Pinch of cayenne, optional
Steamed rice or cooked orzo, for serving

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Place drained and squeezed spinach in a large bowl with feta, garlic powder, dried oregano and 1 teaspoon kosher salt. Stir well to combine.

Add beef and mix well (I used my hands). Divide the mixture into a dozen portions, shaping them into balls. I made them slightly smaller and got 16 balls.

Space them evenly on the sheet pan and spray with cooking spray.

Roast until browned and firm to the touch, about 20-25 minutes. You can always crack one open to make sure it's cooked enough, if you need some reassurance.

Meanwhile, place yogurt in a small bowl and whisk in garlic and dill. Add zest and juice of 1 lemon, stir to combine, then season to taste with salt and cayenne, if using.

Serve meatballs hot, warm or at room temperature over rice or orzo, with the sauce and additional lemon slices for squeezing over.

Adapted from "What Goes with That: 100 Recipes, 20 Charts, Endless Possibilities" by Julia Turshen

MetroCreative

QUICK FIX

Vietnamese Pork Stir Fry

By LINDA GASSENHEIMER
Tribune News Service (TNS)

I love the light, savory sauces used in Vietnamese-style stir-fries. They're a refreshing change from the heavier, thicker sauces often found in other versions.

For this quick meal, I use thinly sliced pork tenderloin and delicate dried rice noodles. The noodles and broccoli are briefly cooked together in boiling water for just three minutes, then tossed into the stir-fry, where they absorb the fragrant sauce and come together in a fresh, flavorful dish.

HELPFUL HINTS:

■ Any type of thin noodles can be used.

■ Green beans can be used instead of broccoli.

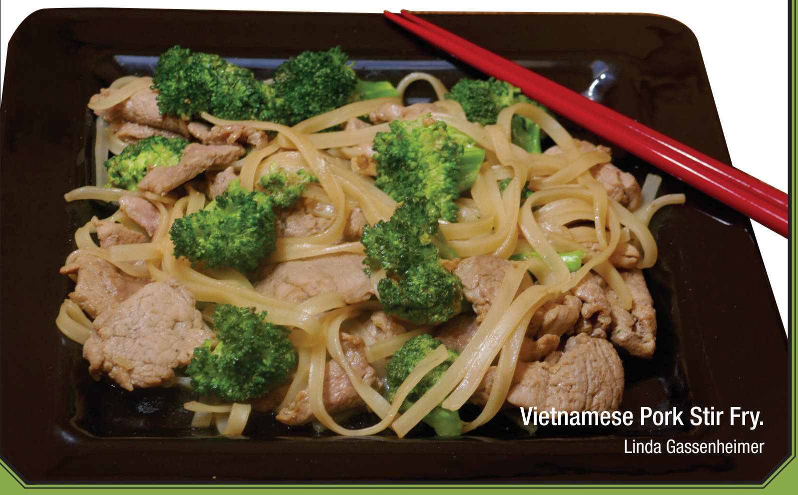
■ Canola oil can be used instead of sesame oil.

Linda Gassenheimer is the author of over 30 cookbooks, including her newest, "The 12-Week Diabetes Cookbook." Listen to Linda on www.WDNA.org and all major podcast sites. Email her at Linda@DinnerInMinutes.com.

Vietnamese Pork Stir Fry
Yield 2 servings

4 garlic cloves crushed
2 tablespoons brown sugar
3 tablespoons reduced salt soy sauce
3 teaspoons ground ginger
3 tablespoons water
3/4 pound pork tenderloin, thinly sliced
1/2 cup sliced onion
4 ounces thin dried rice noodles
2 tablespoons sesame oil
4 cups broccoli florets

Combine garlic, sugar, soy sauce, ginger and 2 tablespoons water in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a simmer and cook 5 minutes or until sugar is melted. Remove from heat and add pork to sauce and let sit for 5 minutes turning the meat over 2 or 3 times. Meanwhile, bring a medium saucepan 3/4 full of water to a boil and add the rice noodles. Boil for 3 minutes add the broccoli to the water for 1 minute. Drain. Heat oil in a wok or large frying over high heat. Add the onion and saute 2 minutes. Add the pork with the sauce. Cook tossing the pork with the onion for 2 minutes. Add the broccoli and rice noodles. Toss all the ingredients together for 2 to 3 minutes. Divide in half and serve on 2 dinner plates.



Vietnamese Pork Stir Fry.
Linda Gassenheimer

Pork Parmesan with Spaghetti with Peppery Arugula

By LINDA GASSENHEIMER
Tribune News Service (TNS)

Pork tenderloin is the star of this quick dinner. True to its name, it's naturally tender and juicy, and because it's so lean it cooks in just a few minutes. The pork is served over a bed of spaghetti tossed with fresh arugula, whose peppery bite adds a bright, fresh contrast. Thin slices of Parmesan melt gently over the pork, adding a rich, nutty finish to the dish.

For an easy way to create Parmesan slices instead of grated cheese, simply use a potato peeler to shave thin strips directly from the wedge.

HELPFUL HINTS:

■ Pork loin chops can be used instead of pork tenderloin.

■ Spinach can be added to the spaghetti instead of arugula.

Pork Parmesan
Yield 2 servings

3/4 pound boneless pork tenderloin
olive oil spray
1 1/2-cups frozen diced onion
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1 1/2-cups tomato sauce
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese slices.
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Remove visible fat from the pork tenderloin. Cut 2-inch slices from the tenderloin. Place them on a mat and cover them with plastic wrap or parchment paper. Pat the slices down to about 1/2-inch thick. This can be done with a meat bat or bottom of a heavy skillet. Heat a large-size nonstick skillet over medium-high heat and spray with olive oil spray. Add the pork, onion and garlic. Brown pork 3 minutes. Turn pork over and brown second side of pork 3 minutes. Add the tomato sauce. Bring to a gentle simmer. Place sliced Parmesan cheese over pork and cover with a lid. Simmer 2 minutes, do not boil. The cheese will melt on the pork. A meat thermometer should read 145 degrees. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Spaghetti with Peppery Arugula
Yield 2 servings

3 ounces whole wheat spaghetti
4 cups prewashed arugula
2 teaspoons olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Bring a large pot 3/4 full of water to a boil and add spaghetti. Cook 9 minutes add arugula and drain. Add oil toss well. Add salt and pepper to taste. Divide in half and serve with the pork.

Linda Gassenheimer is the author of over 30 cookbooks, including her newest, "The 12-Week Diabetes Cookbook." Listen to Linda on www.WDNA.org and all major podcast sites. Email her at Linda@DinnerInMinutes.com.

Pork Parmesan with Spaghetti with Peppery Arugula.
Linda Gassenheimer / TNS

ENTERTAINMENT

Emma D'Arcy as Rhaenyra Targaryen in "House of the Dragon."
HBO / TNS

Defending their throne

Emma D'Arcy on preparing for battle on 'House of the Dragon'

By TRACY BROWN
Los Angeles Times (TNS)

LOS ANGELES — In the third season of "House of the Dragon," one of Emma D'Arcy's wishes comes true.

The British actor, who portrays Westeros' displaced would-be sovereign Rhaenyra Targaryen in HBO's fantasy epic, has mentioned in past interviews their desire for their character to carry a weapon and asking showrunner Ryan Condal to make it happen.

So far in the series, which kicks off its new season Sunday, Rhaenyra has briefly handled a blade in private. She's also spoken about swords as a symbol of authority. But the queen doesn't carry a sword on her hip, unlike most of her male counterparts.

"I just want to say I won that battle," D'Arcy, 33, says of the status of their request during a recent video call from London. "The hows and the wherefores can wait, but it's OK to say that I won that battle … by a story means that I wasn't expecting."

But this deadly addition to her wardrobe is not the only change for Rhaenyra this season.

For the first time in the Targaryen war of succession, "there is momentum to Rhaenyra's campaign," says D'Arcy. "Historically, we've seen Rhaenyra on the back foot in a kind of reactionary position. In the start of Season 3, she's in a position of real strategic political power."

Created by Condal and "A Song of Ice and Fire" author George R. R. Martin, " House of the Dragon " tells the story of this civil war known as the Dance of the Dragons. The eldest child of the previous king, Viserys I, Rhaenyra was named the official heir to the Iron Throne as a teenager by her father, despite women usually being overlooked in the line of succession. But upon her father's death, her younger half brother Aegon – who was born after Rhaenyra was named heir – was crowned king of the Seven Kingdoms instead.

Picking up directly after the events of Season 2, the new season kicks off with Rhaenyra's victory appearing imminent after she adds more numbers and dragon riders to her military might, as well as key information and a promise of cooperation from her childhood friend-turned-adversary, Alicent Hightower (Olivia Cooke).

Thus far in the series, Rhaenyra has been easy to root for. Not only is she the rightful heir whose seat on the throne was allowed to be usurped, at least in part, because of patriarchal expectations, but she has also shown restraint and consideration for her subjects unlike most other Targaryens.

"There's a desire in Rhaenyra, I think we've seen on repeat, to actually dismantle some of the feudal hierarchy and actually to say to her subjects, 'You and I are the same,'" says D'Arcy. She's "a character in a position of leadership who has been historically othered [that] recognizes a system of othering."

D'Arcy compares the final stretch of waiting for the series to be released to being in transit on a long journey. They'd just finished their final automated dialogue replacement session to clean up some sound the week before, and they admit there is something about this "liminal moment" that reminds them of being in transit that they really enjoy. ("As a kid, I loved a long car journey, and I often preferred it to arriving at [the destination]," they say.)

They are thoughtful and unhurried in a conversation that roves between Rhaenyra's nuances and relationships, their joy at being back on the Red Keep set in Season 3, their dual appreciation for packing and being provided lunches and even the comforts of broadcast television. D'Arcy describes their work as "pretending" in one breath while in another sharing their strong feelings around dramaturgy and text as they toggle between discussions of stage, film and television acting.

And while the nonbinary actor hopes that their gender is not the most interesting bit about them, D'Arcy is committed to speaking "as loudly as I can on behalf of the trans community."

"[It's] a very turbulent time for the LGBTQ+ community, [but] I am so proud," says D'Arcy. "I'm just lucky that I get to live authentically and do my job. I know that that is a great privilege."

Matt Smith, who plays Rhaenyra's uncle-turned-husband, Daemon Targaryen, in the series, describes D'Arcy as a "one-off."

"They're such a truly deep thinking, emotional human being who has a voracious IQ," Smith says, likening D'Arcy's approach and prep to that of a historian's. "Super, super bright. Usually the brightest person in the room. And they have an incredible, quiet, powerful generosity of spirit."

"I think actually what's incredible about them as a person and as an actor [is that] there's just this wonderful sense of mystery, even when you know them, and Emma's constantly surprising me with stuff," he adds.

Condal explains that "Rhaenyra goes through an incredible arc change this season" and that the writers challenged both D'Arcy and the character with the material.

Among the challenges Rhaenyra will face this season are personal hurdles as well as a lack of grace from those unwilling to recognize her as a sovereign, all while she starts to believe her reign was ordained by the gods.

"When all those things are thrown into the mix together, it creates a kind of violent counterreaction," Condal says. "You're going to see Rhaenyra go through bumps in the road and all that. But what I was really interested in was taking this character, who … is very easy to root for, and then applying those kind of darker pressures to her and seeing what comes out the other side."

D'Arcy explains Rhaenyra's "growing religiosity" results in the character having fewer doubts about herself and her decisions.

"I think Rhaenyra feels a great duty to many of the kind of peers and colleagues and close relations in her life, [including] Daemon and Mysaria and her father and even Alicent," says D'Arcy. "But there is also somewhere in her an ego that craves legitimacy and recognition and power, and those elements form quite a volatile cocktail this season."

As for Rhaenyra's new sword, Condal was a bit more forthcoming about the show's reasoning.

"We use it as a symbol to show her metamorphosis as a character," Condal says. "So it felt very real and natural and true to Rhaenyra – especially after the scene in Season 1 where she sort of rejects the last vestiges of this kind of feminine prison that she feels like she's been put in when she destroys the gown. I think it sets Rhaenyra off on a really interesting new path."

In addition to those in Rhaenyra's storyline, D'Arcy faced some unscripted challenges of their own. Just before going into production on Season 3, the actor had surgery to reconstruct their ACL after suffering a fall from the stage during a performance of "The Other Place" in London. This meant they were doing their rehabilitation, including learning how to walk again, while filming Season 3. It was a daunting endeavor even before considering that this season would see Rhaenyra – and thus D'Arcy – back in the massive sets of the Red Keep where the Iron Throne sits.

"I remember my first day [on set] because I was in anticipation of whether my knee would hold up to the demands of a season of Westeros," says D'Arcy. "I really hope that some [behind the scenes] comes out of me in all my frocks on my sticks, because for three months … my allotted walking time would get used up onscreen, and then I would sort of hop about."

Although they admit the fall itself was embarrassing, D'Arcy says going through recovery on set "was kind of a beautiful timeline" because people would notice their progress. They also point out that their injury "forced [them] to be incredibly pragmatic" and "proactive" about managing it to make sure it didn't affect their work.

"I think it forced me to be quite adult about the way I approached the season," D'Arcy says.

Despite the scale of the war at hand, which involves aerial battles between dragon riders as well as giant troops of warriors on land and sea, much of the action Rhaenyra has been involved in is interpersonal – at least so far.

There is the character's powerfully charged, if volatile, relationship with Daemon that is back on course after their separation last season. D'Arcy says that "Rhaenyra requires Daemon's violence" this season and describes the characters' return to their royal home in King's Landing as "thrilling."

There is also the strained relationship with her friend-turned-stepmother Alicent, who helped usurp Rhaenyra's throne. D'Arcy explains that despite their frayed friendship, Alicent remains "a strange custodian of Rhaenyra's conscience."

"I think Rhaenyra still privileges Alicent's judgment, even when they are totally at odds with one another," D'Arcy says.

But to D'Arcy "the hardest to describe" dynamic that has developed is between Rhaenyra and her adviser Mysaria (Sonoya Mizuno), who used to be Daemon's paramour. During the second season, after Mysaria became one of Rhaenyra's allies and confidants, their relationship took a passionate turn.

"I love that they start off actually in a place of conflict [and] deeply suspicious of one another," says D'Arcy, who notes that both characters developed skills to "navigate male power holders." The attraction for Rhaenyra is "a matter of being seen in a way that's completely new."

"Mysaria is maybe the first truly romantic connection," adds D'Arcy. In contrast to Daemon, whose similarities with Rhaenyra "represents a kind of horizon of possibility that is about power and domination," with Mysaria it is more like opposites attracting.

"Mysaria offers a window into a type of hardship that opens Rhaenyra's eyes to a portion of experience to which she's had no access," they say.

Rhaenyra is the first character D'Arcy has played on a multi-season series, and they say that the "privileges that come with that are still revealing themselves to me."

Noting that they and their character have been "growing up … in tandem," D'Arcy says they increasingly understand Rhaenyra's feelings toward her late father as well as what she feels she owes him as "a custodian of his spirit."

While Rhaenyra's story will touch on "the more sinister side of relinquishing doubt," D'Arcy considers that there is, perhaps, "a more positive side to that too."

"I definitely noticed in quite a pronounced way that entering my 30s meant I got to kind of let go of some old self-doubt that had been probably the motivating force of my 20s," D'Arcy says. "The great privilege of living this life is [discovering] there is greater peace with oneself to be found. It's a work in progress, but maybe some of that relinquishing of doubt, I can say I've also been able to claim for myself."

MOVIE REVIEW

Photos by Pixar / Disney / TNS

From left: Jessie (voiced by Joan Cusack), Buzz Lightyear (voiced by Tim Allen) and Woody (voiced by Tom Hanks) in Disney and Pixar's "Toy Story 5."

Pixar's playthings grapple with high-tech devices in *'Toy Story 5'*

By KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service (TNS)

After the emotional climax (or terrorism?) of "Toy Story 3," every subsequent "Toy Story" installment has had to earn its relevance. "Toy Story 4," in 2019, saw Woody (Tom Hanks) grappling with poignant questions about time passing and the utility of toys in a child's life, while the latest film, "Toy Story 5," rushes in with an urgent warning, about one of the scariest current threats to childhood, and indeed life itself – screen time.

Woody and the gang find themselves tackling tech, with cowgirl Jessie (Joan Cusack) leading the charge. The film is about the harm that technology, devices and screens can have on the impressionable young minds of kids, but the lessons here are applicable to everyone, of all ages. As a group of abandoned toys delivered a litany of warnings to Jessie about the dangers of allowing tech into the home, I had to ask a nearby man to turn off his phone during the screening – oh, the irony. He left shortly thereafter, but could have used the lessons imparted in this Disney/Pixar piece, co-written and co-directed by Andrew Stanton, writer of the original film, and Kenna Harris, making her feature debut.

From left: Woody (voiced by Tom Hanks), Buzz Lightyear (voiced by Tim Allen) and Lilypad (voiced by Greta Lee) in Disney and Pixar's "Toy Story 5."

Jessie has taken on the starring role in the life of her kid, Bonnie (Scarlett Spears), with Woody involved in the wild toy life outdoors and Buzz Lightyear (Tim Allen) serving as her deputy. Bonnie is imaginative and spunky, but not very social, and in the hopes of helping her connect with friends, Bonnie's well-meaning parents (Jay Hernandez and Lori Alan) gift her a "Lilypad" tablet, replete with games and group chats and friend requests, oh my!

But friendship – real friendship – isn't as easy as a few taps on the glowing screen. Almost immediately, Bonnie becomes addicted to Lilypad (voiced by Greta Lee), now the antagonist to the coterie of toys. Concerned about the group dynamics in Bonnie's clique, Jessie takes matters into her own hands, and intending to scope out a sleepover, stows away with her trusty steed Bullseye. Instead, Jessie ends up somewhere she never thought she'd return – back at her first home, and collaborating with a few new allies with whom she'd never otherwise: old tech, in the form of a digital camera, mapping device and digital potty training game.

So, "Toy Story 5" isn't entirely anti-tech. Instead, it argues for the thoughtful use of technology, about which Bonnie's parents are frustratingly obtuse. Jessie learns the usefulness and utility of technology through working with Smarty Pants (Conan O'Brien), Snappy (Shelby Rabara) and Atlas (Craig Robinson). There's even some use for a squadron of high-tech Buzz Lightyears that tumble out of a shipping container and make their way to their chosen Star Commander, Jessie. The message is not that kids should only play with vintage toys, it's that they need to use their imaginations, not chase dopamine through addictive games, or experience detached social dynamics online.

Tech does have its place in the world of toys and kids, but with some bumpers on, as everyone discovers. It's a message of compromise, with everyone finding their place in a kid's life, from tablets, to abandoned digital devices, to well-loved rag dolls. For Jessie, her emotional journey is learning how important she has been to all of her kids over the years, even if abandonment meant that she feared she was not enough.

'Toy Story 5'

★★★

MPA rating: PG (for some thematic elements and rude humor)

Running time: 1:42

How to watch: In theaters

The "Toy Story" films are inherently about time and existence, because childhood is all-too-fleeting, toys built to last but only a primary plaything for a few short years. What is the function of a toy if it isn't to play? What is the function of a person without a purpose? This is why these movies move us whenever they come out, tapping into these larger questions about identity and our roles in the world and to each other.

Stanton and Harris do not whiff these crucial elements in delivering a fifth "Toy Story," even if it does feel a bit overly busy, with overlapping, intertwining storylines (the squadron of Buzz Lightyears are cute but their bit takes away valuable real estate from some other beloved favorite characters). This fifth installment might not feel as weighty as some of the other toy stories, but the animation remains beautiful, the humor heartfelt. This group of toys still has some play left in them, and some lessons to impart, so for a moment, tuck those screens away and enjoy another romp with Jessie, Woody and Buzz.

MOVIE REVIEW

Hero of folklore worse off in *'The Death of Robin Hood'*

By KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service (TNS)

'Who lives, who dies, who tells your story?" This is one of the culminating lines from Lin-Manuel Miranda's smash hit 2015 musical "Hamilton," but it's also the animating force behind Michael Sarnoski's "The Death of Robin Hood," starring Hugh Jackman in the title role. This legendary figure of English folklore has a specific meaning attached to his name, which is synonymous with the altruistic impulse to redistribute wealth. But in his take on the tale, focusing on the end of his life, Sarnoski suggests that perhaps Robin Hood wasn't such a good guy, even if he was robbing from the rich to give to the poor. It all depends on who's telling the story, right?

Sarnoski burst onto the scene in 2021 with his debut feature "Pig," in which he outfitted Nicolas Cage with a long gray wig and sent him on a dangerous quest (to find his beloved, valuable pet). He does something similar in "The Death of Robin Hood," outfitting Jackman in a long gray wig and sending him on a quest (to achieve some kind of salvation).

But first, Sarnoski has to establish that this Robin Hood

'The Death of Robin Hood'

★★

MPA rating: R (for strong bloody violence)

Running time: 2:03

How to watch: In theaters

isn't the one we remember from the movies – he's not the dashing cartoon Disney fox, or Errol Flynn, or Kevin Costner, or Cary Elwes, or Russell Crowe, or even Taron Egerton. No, this Robin Hood is much worse, sleeping in matted filth on the moors, reduced to a feral life of constant vigilance against murderous revenge-seekers for the years of evil deeds he's carried out with his compatriot, Little John (Bill Skarsgård).

Now called Edward, Little John has achieved some measure of domesticity, but still, he and Robin go a-murdering once again, resulting in a yet another vengeful attack from a relative of their victims. A wounded Robin ends up in an idyllic priory on a coastal island, tended to by a healer, Brigid (Jodie Comer), learning

Aidan Monaghan / A24 / TNS

Hugh Jackman stars in "The Death of Robin Hood."

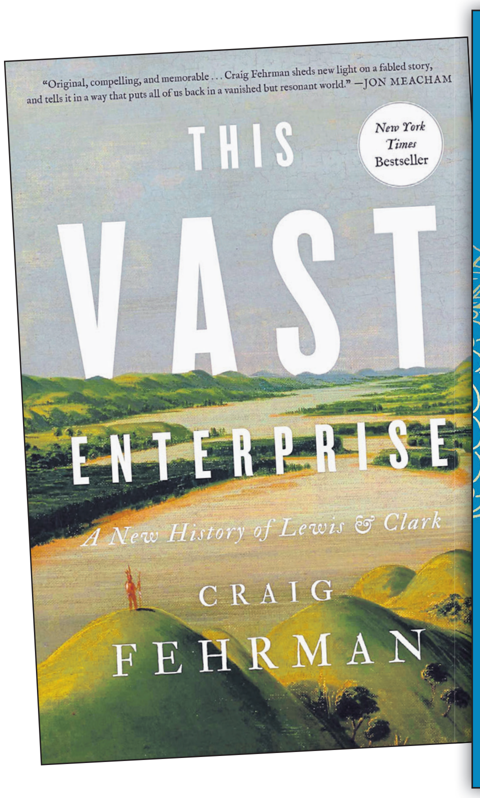
the ropes from the local leper (Murray Bartlett). In this oasis, Robin's identity is unknown, and he finds the space to embrace a gentler side of himself, particularly with Little John/Edward's daughter, Little Margaret (Faith Delaney).

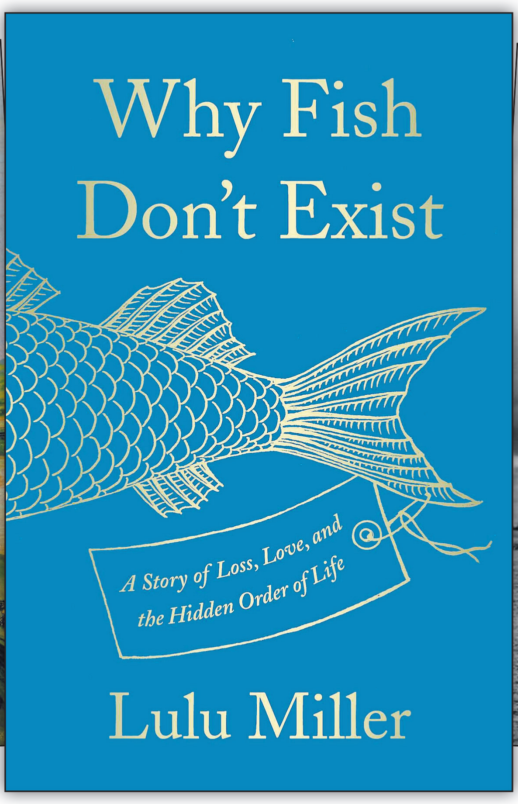
Set on the misty outlying islands of the North Atlantic, with its blend of bloody, brutal violence, primitive spirituality and meditative tone, "The Death of Robin Hood" is situated in the realm of films like David Lowery's "The Green Knight" and Robert Eggers' "The Northman." Cinematographer Pat Scola pulls some arresting images out of the fire and fog, and the score of largely traditional Celtic music by Jim Ghedi is easily one of the best of the year. The film is a fine showcase for a different kind of performance from Jackman, and Comer is always a compelling screen presence.

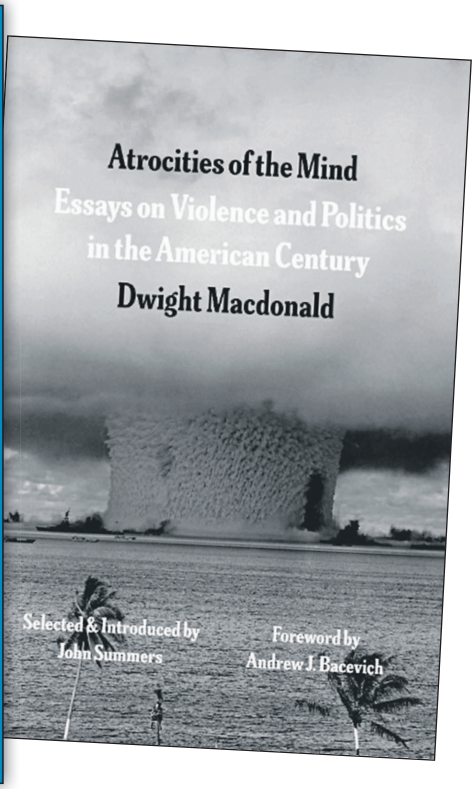
But "The Death of Robin Hood" isn't as hallucinatory or weird as it could – or should – be. Sarnoski gestures at bleakness but feints from full existential crisis; he tries and fails to be witchy. Despite all the mud and blood, nothing about this film is particularly earthy or embodied. It ends up as this profoundly dull and utterly pointless commentary on the concept of narrative and mythology. "What if Robin Hood was a bad guy?" OK, what of it? The best concept that Sarnoski presents here is the hell of living in an endless cycle of vengeance, but he allows his anti-hero to escape that all too cleanly and conveniently. This Robin Hood is just an old, tired man who ultimately finds some peace at the end of his life, even if it's unearned.

As an audience, we're left wondering what all of this is for, and who it's for. Why trouble the Robin Hood myth at all, and why now? One can't help but cynically wonder if the inspiration for this project was merely the convenience of recognizable intellectual property and available financing from Screen Ireland. This theory might be creatively pessimistic, but it is a nagging question, especially when the ones posed by the film are already so stale and tired. Expect no revelations from "The Death of Robin Hood" except the one that's announced in the title.

BOOKS







Simon & Schuster | Simon & Schuster | University of Chicago Press || TNS

Looking for a book for America 250?

HERE'S WHAT HISTORIANS ARE READING

By CHRISTOPHER BORRELLI
Chicago Tribune (TNS)

What a difference 50 years makes.

The country that commemorates the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in July will be a radically different place than the country that celebrated a ubiquitous bicentennial in 1976. Of course it will. But one part of that commemoration will not change: The yearning of everyday Americans to understand their nation's stories. Certainly, publishers hope so; their summer catalogs are thick with American history and an emphasis on the founding figures, the first century – the A-list.

For a fresh take on the first American road trip: "The Vast Enterprise: A New History of Lewis & Clark," Indiana-based journalist Craig Fehrman's immersive panorama, drawing on oral histories and long-buried sources, rescues this potted narrative from the usual classroom tales of two men and a canoe, for a revelatory portrait about mutual surprise, allowing equal time to both the discovers and the owners of the land being discovered.

For the complicated truth about an Illinois icon: "An Inconvenient Widow: The Torment, Trial, and Triumph of Mary Todd Lincoln," by Lois Romano, who substitutes a glib familiar caricature (she was crazy, domineering, et al) for the nuances of an epic of depression, ambition and loss – and a Chicago courtroom finale that haunts. (If you're planning to see the touring production of Broadway's "Oh, Mary!" when it arrives in the Loop this winter, here's prep work.)

For a longview on contemporary headlines: "The U.S. Constitution: A Comprehensive and Annotated Guide for the Modern Reader," by Melisa Murray (of the Supreme Court podcast "Strict Scrutiny"), who explains every article and Amendment, laying out the history, resonance and gray areas with a patience missing from social-media hot takes.

Not a dud in that bunch.

But what if you have room for just one book about the United States this summer? We asked several Chicago-based historians and authors to recommend one history-minded book – non-fiction, fiction – that every American should read before Labor Day.

Matthew Briones, associate professor of history at University of Chicago

"Beloved" by Toni Morrison. Slavery has always been America's original sin, something Faulkner and Morrison best grapple with in their fiction. The narrator hauntingly says it's "not a story to pass on," when it's exactly this type of traumatic history that we need to remember, process and learn from in our nation's history. That's the only way to heal and get better: to face our history honestly, with all of its ghosts, and in all of its joy and pain.

Rick Perlstein, historian and author of 'Nixonland'

One of the rewards for me, while suffering through the darkness of the first year of the new term of America's most authoritarian president, has been consuming every book by the writer who best grasped and conveyed the darkest parts of the American character, Herman Melville. "Moby-Dick" was only my fourth favorite. First place? "The Confidence-Man: His Masquerade," a strange and wondrous novel that wrestles with what is in out national character that makes us so susceptible to falling for, well, cons.

Barbara Ransby, professor in history, Black studies and gender at University of Illinois

"Original Sins: The (Mis)Education of Black and Native Children and the Construction of American Racism," by Eve L. Ewing. Her book reminds us public education, and the origin stories we tell our children, have a profound impact on how Americans understand and define race, rights, democracy and justice. Ewing's powerful, sweeping narrative grounds us in the uncomfortable truths that exclusion, lies and blatant oppression have been dominant themes throughout the history of American education. And education itself has been a battlefield. This book is critically important because it represents the kind of bold truth-telling being marginalized and banned by many new educational policy mandates – and recklessly erased in many semiquincentennial accounts of this nation's 250 year past.

Kate Masur, professor of history at Northwestern University

Many books are good or even great; few are startlingly original and a joy to read. One such rarity is "Why Fish Don't Exist" by science journalist Lulu Miller. I missed its release in 2020, though it received glowing reviews. (It was a Tribune best book of 2020). It's about a 21st century woman's quest to understand ichthyologist David Starr Jordan, who was born in 1841 and became the first president of Stanford University. But it's really about how to find the meaning in life if you don't believe in God, the desire to make sense of the world, the dangers of intellectual arrogance and the foibles of being human. Why this book in the summer of America 250? "Why Fish Don't Exist" embraces the beauty and depravity of American history. It reminds us that people are drawn to the American past for a million reasons. It's a book of our time, and everyone should read it.

Jonathan Eig, author of 'King: A Life'

Ask me again tomorrow and I'll give you a different answer, but I'd love to see Americans this summer reading "Empire Falls" by Richard Russo. It's got it all: the decline of blue-collar America, the loving embrace of a small town, hilarious hard-luck characters, wrenching family drama, and, through it all, a burning love for America, never mind its troubles. It's set at the end of the 20th century, but it could be almost any time in American history. Slide into a booth at the Empire Grill, order a burger and enjoy.

Amy Dru Stanley, associate history professor at University of Chicago

Richard Hofstadter's "The Paranoid Style in American Politics" (1965), a collection of essays shaped by the Cold War and Red Scare, which explores the fragility of democracy and social comity and freedom of expression. The book speaks to the present, tragically, in tracing how irrational hatreds, belief in conspiracies, fearful nostalgia and apocalyptic delusions can govern American political culture – how the vision of America as an example of liberty for the world becomes a politics of paranoia. We have much to learn from this story of American illiberalism in seeking to protect democracy today.

Daniel Immerwahr, history professor at Northwestern University

"Everyone has the right to be stupid," Leon Trotsky reportedly said. "But comrade Macdonald abuses the privilege." The man in question, Dwight Macdonald, was a renegade communist who revolted against Stalin. He was also a renegade capitalist, a Yale graduate who wrote for Fortune until he clashed with the magazine's owner over a series about the U.S. Steel Corporation. Macdonald ended life as sort of an anarchist. Or maybe elitist? It was hard to tell; he wasn't a joiner so much as a noticer, and at that he was very good. One thing he noticed was violence, and University of Chicago Press just published a collection of his essays on the topic, "Atrocities of the Mind." What they show is someone living through terrible times with courage, openness, curiosity and a refusal to exempt himself from the diagnosis. We could use a few Dwight Macdonalds these days.

BESTSELLERS

Here are the bestsellers for the week that ended Saturday, June 6, compiled from data from independent and chain bookstores, book wholesalers and independent distributors nationwide, powered by Circana BookScan .

Hardcover fiction

1. Whistler. Ann Patchett. Harper
2. Yesteryear. Caro Claire Burke. Knopf
3. Land. Maggie O'Farrell. Knopf
4. Road Trip. Mary Kay Andrews. St. Martin's
5. The Calamity Club. Kathryn Stockett. Spiegel & Grau
6. Our Perfect Storm. Carley Fortune. Berkley
7. The Midnight Train. Matt Haig. Viking
8. The Final Target. Nora Roberts. St. Martin's
9. The Ballad of Falling Dragons. Sarah A. Parker. Avon
10. Kissed by the Gods (deluxe ed.). Caty Rogan. Required

Hardcover nonfiction

1. Revolution. Eric Metaxas. Odysseus
2. View from the East Wing. Jill Biden. Gallery
3. The Land and Its People. David Sedaris. Little, Brown
4. Strangers. Belle Burden. Dial
5. Take Me to Your Leader. Neil deGrasse Tyson. Simon Six
6. The Fix. Barbara McQuade. Seven Stories
7. The Hero Next Door. Martha Raddatz. Avid Reader
8. All We Say. Ben Rhodes. Random House
9. Eat Like a Sardinian. Francesco Mattana. Murdoch
10. No Dumb Questions. Kelce/Kelce. Morrow

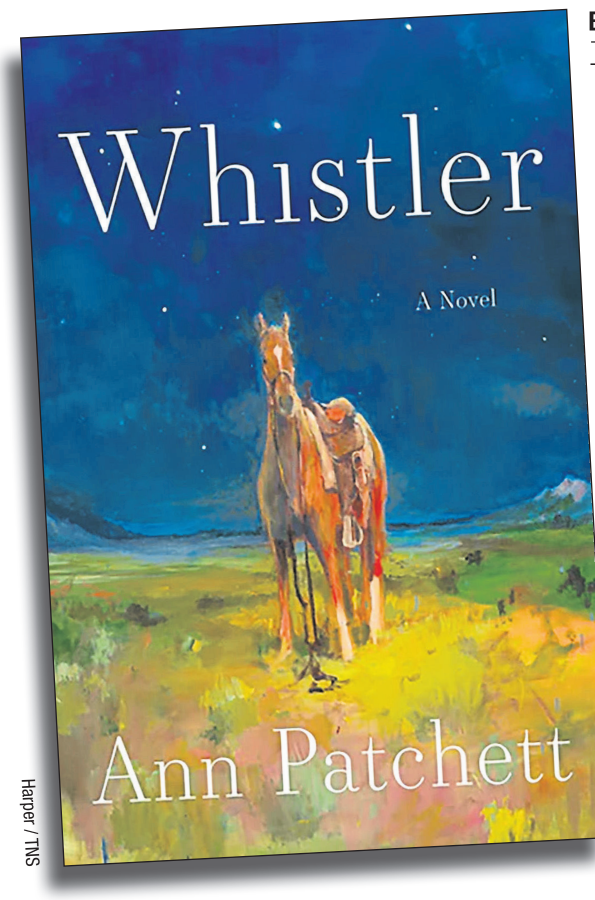
Trade paperback

1. Theo of Golden. Allen Levi. Atria
2. The Divorce. Freida McFadden. Poisoned Pen
3. Dungeon Crawler Carl. Matt Dinniman. Ace
4. Chainsaw Man, Vol. 21. Tatsuki Fujimoto. Viz
5. Dolly All the Time. Annabel Monaghan. Putnam
6. Jujutsu Kaisen, Vol. 30. Gege Akutami. Viz
7. Death on the Lanai. Rachel Ekstrom Courage. Hyperion Avenue
8. Dungeon Crawler Carl, Vol. 1 (graphic novel). Matt Dinniman et al. Vault
9. A Resistance History of the United States. Tad Stoermer. Steerforth
10. Game On. Navessa Allen. Slowburn

Reprinted from Publishers Weekly.

REVIEW

'Dutch House' author Ann Patchett's 'Whistler' is another gem



Harper / TNS

By CHRIS HEWITT
The Minnesota Star Tribune (TNS)

'There should always be some small surprise," the narrator of Ann Patchett's "Whistler" tells us. She's talking about enlivening trips to a cancer clinic, but she could easily mean Patchett's wise, deeply funny novels.

Daphne is a Manhattan teacher who, in the novel's first scene, runs into Eddie, the former stepfather she hasn't seen in 44 years (Patchett's novels usually start with a bang). They were inseparable, united by a near-tragic auto accident, and they become close again – which is why Daphne takes Eddie to his chemo appointments, bringing a surprise bag of cherries to distract and delight him.

The characters in "Whistler" often surprise each other and us: Although Daphne always loved Eddie, she was 9 when he and her mother divorced, so there's plenty she never knew about him – including what happened in his marriage to her mother. Her husband, Jonathan, finds unexpected treasures while clearing out his late mother's house. Daphne is close to younger sister Leda but, somehow, has never told her the details of the accident.

Things people don't say to each other loom large in "Whistler," as they do in Elizabeth Strout's latest. Daphne's mom begs her to keep quiet about the accident details, for instance. But Patchett is going for something more complicated than "If we talk about things, it helps."

There are times when it might be a good idea for these characters to open up to each other, sure. But, during the accident, Eddie and Daphne survive, in part, because they refuse to talk about the possibility of death. And, when Jonathan pretends to know about an illness Eddie has not disclosed, Daphne wonders why whenever people discuss death, they sugarcoat it.

Death, and how we talk about it (or don't) is a preoccupation of "Whistler." A story Eddie tells Daphne gives the novel its title and cover, which is somewhat confusing – there's a painting of a horse named Whistler on it, but this is not a novel about a horse or even about anyone who cares about horses. Daphne loses both a father and a stepfather (like Patchett, whose essay "My Three Fathers" is about her father and two stepfathers), while Jonathan loses his mother. The subject of dying is ever-present.

So is storytelling. Not only is Patchett a storyteller but so are her characters, who sometimes tell stories within stories. Juggling multiple narratives, a skill Patchett demonstrated in " Tom Lake," allows her to explore the varied follies of all of her characters. What, for instance, does it mean that Daphne doesn't tell her husband about her meetings with Eddie, almost as if she's embarking on an affair rather than reconnecting with the man she calls her dad?

Virtually all of the characters are smart, kind and, it must be said, annoyingly well-off. They tell each other stories to entertain or illuminate and, occasionally, they withhold facts for the same reasons. I was particularly drawn to the way they build on each other's remarks, quietly riffing in the way real people make each other laugh.

The first time Leda, her husband, Steve, and son Henry connect with Eddie, Henry says the situation is ridiculous.

"You think it's ridiculous because you've never known the fleeting pleasure of having a decent stepfather," Leda said to her son.

"There are a lot of cultural experiences you miss out on when your parents stay married," Steve said.

Patchett's characters feel like people we know who behave in ways we recognize as they try to solve problems that ring true. They care for each other and, if you're a Patchett fan, this will come as no surprise: You'll care about them, too.

AUTOMOTIVE

AUTO REVIEWS

Manual Mazda3 is the anti-robot car

By HENRY PAYNE
The Detroit News (TNS)

Tesla wowed the automotive word in January with news it was abandoning its Model S/X models and putting the pedal to the metal on robots. Robot rideshare cars. Humanoid robots. Humanoid robots driving robot cars. Bots bots bots.

Happily, there are still manual driver's toys out there to cope with the dystopian robot future. Like the six-speed, 2.5-liter Mazda3 S Premium hatchback in my driveway.

WAUUUUGH! I escaped the robot headlines and headed north to rural Memphis, Michigan, for a quick road trip. This is manual country. Wide open space and empty roads where you can really row the gearbox. Can a rideshare robot do that?

Like in Mazda's halo MX-5 Miata, the Mazda3's six-speed is a joy. No rubbery gates here (looking at you, BMW). I never missed a shift despite flogging the Mazda3 unmercifully.

Indeed, the compact Mazda3 S Premium model (the only Mazda3 trim accessorized with a stick) is best understood as an alternative to the similarly priced Miata roadster.

The MX-5 is deservedly an industry icon – a throwback to 1960s English sports cars that, 60 years later, have come to define a Japanese performance brand. It also has but two seats and is only practical for road trips if you're driving to an out-of-state autocross. At 6'5", I don't sit in the Miata so much as wear it.

The S Premium trim of the 2.5-liter Mazda3 does not share its drivetrain with the 2.0-liter Miata, but it has similar output while packaging the experience in a practical hatchback. This is no hot hatch, mind you, like the Mazda3 Turbo or Volkswagen Golf GTI or all-wheel drive Golf R.

But, ahem, unlike those automatic hellions, my tester options a stick. WAAUUGGGH! Oh, that's engaging. #SaveTheManual.

And, like its stablemates, it's gorgeous. Check out 3's loooong hood and sculpted flanks that sweep backward as into a tidy capsule. Like other classic, head-turning coupe rear ends – think Bugatti Type 57SC Atlantic or Jaguar E-Type or Cobra Daytona Kamm-tail.

Unlike those classics, it has four seats.

Henry Payne / The Detroit News / TNS

Though they aren't the most comfortable four seats in the biz.

The coupe-like C-pillar looks awesome outside but restricts light inside. Combined with the rear sofa's lack of legroom (I'm a tight fit), it's a bit claustrophobic back there. But at least it's a back seat, with a useful hatchback behind it.

On an airport run, I easily fit two carry-on bags and a Wilson tennis bag back there with room to spare. Try that in a Miata.

WAAAUUURGH! I nailed the Mazda3 onto Wolcott Road. Second gear all the way to thge 6,500 RPM redline. WAAAUUURGH! Shift to third. WAAAUUURGH! Show me a robot that can do that.

The front-wheel-drive Mazda3 lacks Miata's rear-wheel-drive playfulness, but traction was superb, even on an 18-degree Michigan winter day when the asphalt was bone cold.

No tire-spinning. No torque-steer. The 3 went where I pointed it. The more expensive Mazda3 Turbo comes with a gobsmacking 310 pound-feet of torque, which engineers channel with all-wheel drive. Smart, that.

The 186 pound-feet of torque was plenty for the Mazda3 front-wheel driver. Until I miscalculated a snowdrift on the shoulder while making a U-turn.

The Mazda high-sided and I was stuck. Front-drive wheels spinning, no drive from the rears. Ah, how a Mazda3 Turbo would have been handy right about then. I dug out the snow beneath the car and hopped back in. Then, in first gear, I rocked the hatch back-and-forth with varying doses of RPM until I was unstuck.

Try that in your slushbox car.

There are plenty of reasons to have a stick in your garage. My friend Sean likes his manual Porsche Boxster GTS as contrast to his Tesla robot car (which he drives on Autopilot 90 percent of the time when commuting). My son Sam likes his 2014 manual Golf GTI as an immersive escape from writing computer code. Me? I like to misbehave.

But, analog as they may be, sticks like the Mazda3 also have benefited from modern electronics. Let me count the ways.

Hill start assist. On a Macomb County hill (there aren't many) waiting for a stoplight, I engaged the clutch for first gear, and the Mazda3 engaged hill assist so the car didn't roll backward (imagine how great that is in San Francisco). I rocketed smoothly away.

Auto brake. In Payne family lore, my father once parked his car at the top of a West Virginia hill ... and forgot to engage the parking brake. When he re-emerged from his appointment, the car was gone. It had rolled off the hill and crashed into a brick wall at the bottom of the ravine. He shoulda had a Mazda3. Whenever I turned it off, the electronic emergency brake automatically engaged – regardless of where I had parked.

Adaptive Cruise Control. Mazda comes with a laundry list of standard features, including adaptive cruise control. That's right, ACC with a manual. On long stretches of I-75 and M-59, the Mazda3 purred along, ACC radar maintaining a distance to vehicles in front of me.

The superb manual tranny ergonomics set the tone for the cabin. Mazda engineers spend a lot of time syncing car and driver. Steering wheel controls for radio volume and ACC are rocker switches so I never diverted my eyes from to road to adjust those features – unlike some competitors (looking at you, Toyota).

An optional head-up display (recommended) contains all the information you need to keep your eye on the road: Speed, speed limit, blindspot-assist graphic, even Google Maps directions.

Mazda's biggest ergonomics failing is a remote-dial controlled infotainment display in a touchscreen, smartphone world. The intention was good – to locate the screen high on the dash for better driver engagement – but the execution is clumsy. Don't worry, you'll get used to it – and Google voice commands and those divine steering-wheel rockers mean you don't need use the rotary dial much anyway.

Everything else in the cockpit begs to be used. Manual shifter, telepathic steering, intuitive clutch – all wrapped in a premium interior and Soul Red exterior that, at $33K, puts many luxe cars to shame. Take that, robots.

The dystopian future will be postponed as long as there are manuals like Mazda3.

Henry Payne is auto critic for The Detroit News.

2026 Mazda3 Hatchback

★★★★

Vehicle type: Front-engine, front-wheel-drive, five-passenger hatchback

Price: $33,480, including $1,295 destination fee (S Premium model with manual transmission as tested)

Powerplant: 2.5-liter inline 4-cylinder

Power: 186 horsepower, 191 pound-feet of torque

Transmission: Six-speed manual

Performance: 0-60 mph, 7.0 seconds (Car and Driver); top speed, 125 mph

Weight: 3,058 pounds

Fuel economy: EPA, 25 mpg city/34 highway/28 combined; range, 449 miles

Report card

Highs: Upscale design; stick-tastic

Lows: Tight backseat; rotary screen controller

Sorry, SUVs, 2026 Genesis G90 sedan smacks you out of the luxury game

By LARRY PRINTZ
Tribune News Service (TNS)

The 2026 Genesis G90 sedan rolls into a world that has collectively lost its mind, swapping full-size luxury sedans for SUVs that are basically suburban treehouses on wheels. These things are tall, cavernous and about as ubiquitous as Starbucks. And yet here comes the G90, sporting four doors, a trunk and enough leather to upholster a small yacht club. One can almost picture the rattling ghosts of Cadillac DeVilles, Lincoln Town Cars and Chrysler Imperials waving from their tufted-velour, shag-carpeted mausoleums.

It's not that people stopped wanting a true full-size luxury sedan. No. Detroit just decided to pretend they did.

The suits with spreadsheets in their eyes wrote off luxury sedans decades ago, figuring they could slap some leather on a pickup truck, call it an SUV, and charge you $10,000 extra for the privilege of sitting higher. Accountants, not customers, are Detroit's real engineers.

And Lexus? They've been watching their once-great LS rot quietly in the corner, desperate to be sporty while looking like a half-melted Kabuki mask. Turns out, a luxury car is supposed to be beautiful and comfortable, as well as competent. Who knew?

Genesis did. It hasn't lost its mind or its taste. Its designers and engineers remember that a proper luxury sedan is supposed to feel luxurious, not just look like you've got money. The G90 is stately without ever tipping into pompous. Its exterior styling is a kind of restrained modernism filtered through an American sensibility. It's bold yet polite, muscular without looking like it bench-presses small buildings for fun. It has a stunningly original presence.

Comparing it to Cadillac, Lincoln and Chrysler luxury sedans of old is instructive. The old Cadillacs were loud and brazen in their appetite for asphalt. Lincolns were like a comfortable club chair on wheels, and the Chrysler Imperial always tried to be a respected part of the club. The Genesis G90 takes Cadillac's styling bravado, Lincoln's cushy serenity and Chrysler's ambition and refines it through a European filter. The result is something that could pass for an American-made European car without the attitude.

The test car was a high-end Prestige Black model, dressed in so much black trim it sullied its elegance much like a missing tooth ruins a supermodel's smile. It's proof that no amount of money can polish away bad taste.

Climb inside, and Genesis delivers what Detroit used to before accountants doomed it to mediocrity. Namely, leather that smells like a welcome hug, wood trim that reminds you that someone spent an afternoon sanding with care, and technology so sophisticated it can probably negotiate a real estate deal on your behalf. Seats recline and massage, they adjust their temperature to keep you comfy. The power doors close at the touch of a button, while rear sunshades indulge your wannabe celebrity status. Meanwhile, the infotainment screen is big enough to qualify as a second windshield, but unlike some German counterparts, it doesn't make you feel as if you've stepped into Times Square. And it's intuitive to use, unlike BMW and Mercedes-Benz, who strap a PhD in engineering to the driver's seat and expect you to consult it before you tap it.

Performance-wise, the G90 doesn't humiliate its passengers, but it won't embarrass its competitors either. It's fitted with a twin-turbocharged and supercharged 3.5-liter V-6 mild hybrid powertrain that delivers 409 horsepower and 405 pound-feet of torque through an eight-speed automatic transmission to all four wheels.

It accelerates like it knows that the speed limit exists only to be politely acknowledged. Unlike a BMW, which will make you feel guilty for every mile-per-hour over 50, or a Mercedes-Benz, which will lecture you while your bladder protests, the Genesis simply glides forward with a nod and a wink. The steering is precise but forgiving, more Jeeves than James Bond. It's not a BMW M5 in a suit, nor does it need to be. It glides with the composure of a statesman, and in an era of potholes and unpredictable pedestrians, that's a feat. Passengers remain blissfully unaware of the city's craters.

Fuel economy is unexceptional at 20 mpg, and it requires premium unleaded. But no one buys a full-size luxury sedan to admire its fuel economy. Still, the hybrid option allows you to maintain the illusion that you care about the planet even as you thoroughly enjoy the V-6's growl.

Ultimately, the G90 is less a car and more a state of mind: comfortable, confident, and aware of its own dignity. In traffic jams, it does not rage. On the highway, it does not brag. It simply exists, quietly reminding you of a time when luxury meant civility, style, and a soft ride rather than self-centered aggression and proof of your new-money status.

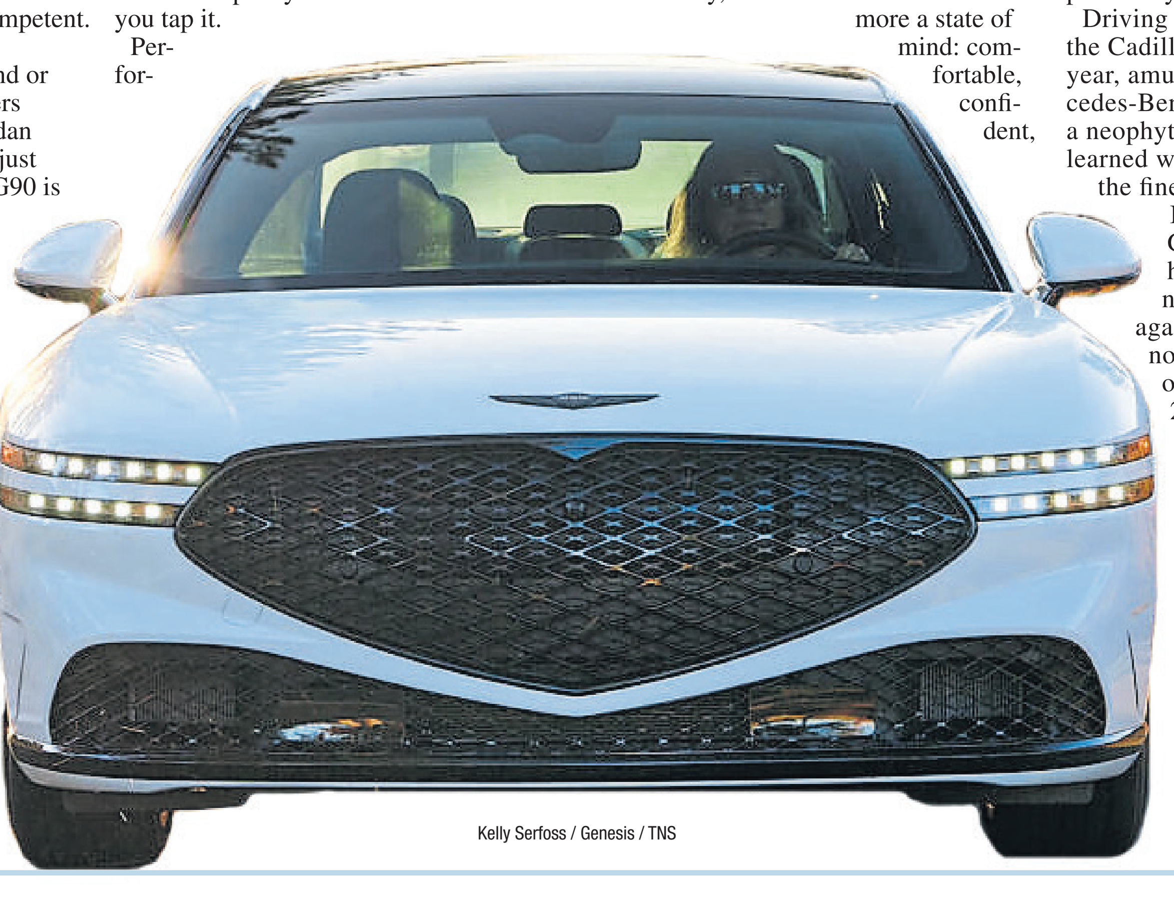
Driving it makes you nostalgic for the Cadillacs and Lincolns of yesteryear, amused by the BMWs and Mercedes-Benzes of today, and amazed that a neophyte Korean luxury brand has learned what Detroit sought to forget: the fine art of polite superiority.

In short, the 2026 Genesis G90 is the sedan the world has forgotten it still wants. It's not just a car; it's an argument against the idea that luxury must now come in the shape of a tall, overcompensating SUV. In the 2026 G90, Genesis isn't merely keeping up with history. They're politely correcting it.

And they do so with a sly grin.

After all, Cadillac, Lincoln, Lexus, BMW, and Mercedes-Benz have produced some epic machinery. But Genesis is looking to do better. Considering the nearly non-existent competition, they might just do it – if the Chinese don't do it first.

Larry Printz is an automotive journalist based in South Florida.


Kelly Serfoss / Genesis / TNS

2026 Genesis G90 3.5T E-SC MHEV Prestige Black AWD

Base price: $105,750

Powertrain: Twin-turbocharged & supercharged 3.5-liter V6 hybrid

Horsepower/Torque: 409/405 pound-feet

EPA rating (combined city/highway): 20 mpg

Fuel required: 91 Octane

Length/Width/Height: 208/76/59 inches

Ground clearance: 5.8 inches

Cargo capacity: 10.6 cubic feet

Towing capacity: Not rated

TECHNOLOGY

GADGETS

Great tools for your yard

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service (TNS)

You would be hard-pressed to find a professional landscaper who doesn't use STIHL gas-powered equipment, since it is the pinnacle in the industry. It's not a stretch to say that the company achieves the same status with its battery-powered handheld tools.

Case in point: the **STIHL BGA 50**, a 36-volt battery-powered handheld leaf blower set designed for homeowners. After using it for a few weeks in my medium-sized yard, I was consistently on the prowl, looking for debris to blow off. Sure, I was having fun with it, but the performance was second to none.

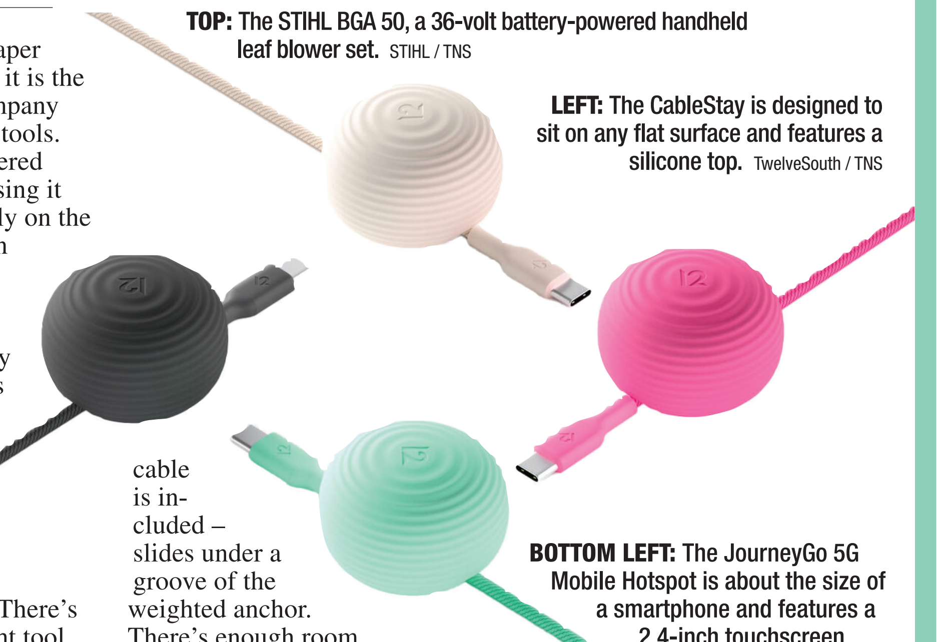
If I had to choose just one feature that made it stand out, by far it was the consistency of the battery power with the BGA 50's intelligent electronics from the time it was freshly charged until the battery needed recharging. Similar devices from other brands experience power degradation as the battery's capacity decreases. The four-level power display on the back of the battery accurately let me know when it was about to need a charge.

If gas-powered is your thing, I get it. The power is there, but switching to batteries for home use is the way to go in my book. All you do is plug it in at the back of the blower, and you're ready to go. There's nothing else to do except carry the well-balanced lightweight tool around to where it's needed. The relatively quiet 4.8-pound blower has an on/off trigger under the soft-touch rubber handle. It's also variable speed, controlled by how hard you press the trigger.

I haven't used previous STIHL battery-operated blowers, but they tout this one as offering more than a 20 percent increase in blowing force over the previous generation, along with reduced weight and quieter operation. Having a battery-powered blower that starts and stops instantly is beneficial for daily yard work, but having it in seasons when leaves and buds litter your driveway and garage hourly is key.

Included with the BGA 50 set is an AK 20 battery, an AL 101 battery charger, and a blower tube. Purchasing an extra battery is always a good idea. STIHL is offering a $50 promotion through the end of June.

https://www.stihlusa.com/en/p/leaf-blowers-blowers-vacuum-shredders-bga-50-battery-powered-blower-1029003#bga-50-set-1029003. $249.99



TOP: The STIHL BGA 50, a 36-volt battery-powered handheld leaf blower set. STIHL / TNS

LEFT: The CableStay is designed to sit on any flat surface and features a silicone top. TwelveSouth / TNS

BOTTOM LEFT: The JourneyGo 5G Mobile Hotspot is about the size of a smartphone and features a 2.4-inch touchscreen. TravlFi / TNS

The **TwelveSouth CableStay** has to be the simplest, but most useful gadget you can get. Instantly, it solves the problem of finding a missing cable that slid off your nightstand, behind your desk, or wherever your charging station is.

Almost any charging cable – a 5-foot woven USB-C cable is included – slides under a groove of the weighted anchor. There's enough room for smooth-glide cable movement either way, while keeping it in place so the charging tip can't enter the bottom-sided tunnel. Nothing but weight keeps it in place, nothing magnetic or friction.

The 1.85-by-1.22-by-0.39-inch CableStay is designed to sit on any flat surface and features a silicone top, a weighted polycarbonate base and a strong cable. The color-matched, strong, woven cable is rated to deliver up to 60 watts of power. Of course, you can use other charging cables besides the one included.

Color choices for the $29.99 CableStay include slate, dune, mint, and fuchsia. A color-matched cable wrap is also included.

https://www.twelvesouth.com/products/cablestay

TravlFi's JourneyGo 5G Mobile Hotspot is the premier gadget to take with you on vacation this summer. The pocket-sized device connects to the strongest available signal across multiple major networks. This ensures you'll be able to surf the internet from almost anywhere while staying connected for maps, directions and finding local restaurants, whether you're traveling or relaxing at a remote campground.

The JourneyGO 5G Hotspot, ideal for those who have to work on the go, is about the size of a smartphone and features a 2.4-inch touchscreen. It's IP54 waterproof-rated and supports up to 16 devices. Inside is a 5,000 mAh battery, good for up to 24 hours of use. The Wi-Fi range is rated for 75 to 100 feet and runs on 802.11 a/b/g/n/ac/ax WiFi 6 – Dual Band 2.4 GHz + 5GHz. 5G speeds are listed as 25 to 150 Megabits per second and a 180 peak. For 4G 15 Mbps to 40 Mbps with a 75 Mbps peak.

The hotspot hardware is $299. There are a variety of month-to-month data, contract-free plans starting at $19 for a 2G plan and going up to unlimited for $129 per month, with options in between so you have what you need. A data estimator on the TravlFi site includes a 5-minute quiz to help you choose a plan that meets your needs.

https://travlfi.com

Contact Gregg Ellman at greggellman@mac.com. Follow him on Twitter @greggellman.

SOUND ADVICE

Electric scissors make quick work of cardboard

By DON LINDICH
Tribune News Service (TNS)

This week I have another handy home tool in a class of its own. Much like the blower/dusters, reading about it is one thing, but experiencing it really opens your eyes to what it can do.

The HOTO EdgeFlow Cordless Electric Scissors are rechargeable and have a quarter-inch opening with a guide and blade guard next to a spinning, self-sharpening faceted blade. (I showed it to an artist friend and he made the comment that the facets would duplicate the actual cutting action of a pair of scissors.) There is a small safety button that you push before squeezing the trigger. Once the disc starts spinning you can release the safety and start cutting. That leads to my first tip. Don't put the scissor disc to the material and start it spinning. Get it spinning before you push into the material to be cut.

With today's internet economy, we get bombarded with cardboard boxes. Breaking them down by tearing them or cutting with scissors or a box cutter gets the job done, but there is a certain amount of risk involved with bladed objects, your hands get sore, and it is still a tedious chore. The HOTO scissors make it fun as they effortlessly cut through cardboard like a smooth, quiet buzz-saw. You can cut through cardboard practically as fast as you can push the scissors, and the amount of resistance isn't quite like the proverbial hot knife through butter, but is probably easier than a knife through refrigerator-cold butter. Not only can you chop up a cardboard box quickly and easily, you could probably turn it into confetti if that's what you wanted to do.

I also tried cutting a piece of paper, and had a perfect test sheet. I just renewed my vehicle registration and only the bottom 20 percent of the printed page goes with the car. I got my registration, started the scissors spinning and ran through the paper. The cut was very neat, but not perfectly straight. I printed out another copy and tried again, holding the paper more firmly this time. The neat, even cut could have come from a paper cutter.

HOTO EdgeFlow Cordless Electric Scissors. Don Lindich / TNS

The scissors can also cut through fabric, carpet or leather and are said to have craft applications as well. Based on my experience they would excel at any task where you cut with scissors or a box cutter, as long as the material fits in the quarter-inch opening. They retail for $69.99 and using the month's discount code HOTOJUNE on hototools.com reduces the price $20 to $49.99. You can see them in action on the HOTO website as well. Like the blower/dusters, I expect readers will be contacting me with new applications for this handy device once they try it for themselves!

Q. I have a 55-inch television and am trying to decide between the $249.99 ZVOX AV835 and $349.99 AV855 before the sale is over. They look very similar. I like good sound, but I really want to understand the dialogue better.

– T.B., Eureka, Missouri

A. You won't go wrong either way, but I would go with the AV855 if it is within your budget. It matches the size of your television perfectly and not only does it make dialogue dramatically easier to understand, it effortlessly fills the room with high-quality sound competitive with $1,000 soundbars. The 20 percent discount code DAD20 on zvox.com does expire on Father's Day, so if you want to get one I would order it by then. Regularly $369.99, a $20 discount combined with the 20 percent off code reduces the AV855 to $280.

Contact Don Lindich at www.soundadvice news.com and use the "submit question" link on that site.

Older versions of Windows will cause issues – eventually

By JIM ROSSMAN
Tribune News Service (TNS)

This week a reader writes with a problem, and tells me how he solved it, but he has a larger question about the cause:

"I have been using Hotmail for over 30 years without any issues. A couple of weeks ago I kept facing a situation when Hotmail would keep asking me to change my password. It directed me to a backup email (Gmail) to get a code. When I entered the code, it would loop me back to get another code. This kept repeating. I was using a desktop with Windows 10. Suggestions I received from the web was to clear my cache and/or use another browser. Nothing worked. I finally deleted the apps from all my devices, re-installed them and now I have access. Could it be that using Windows 10 and suspension of support by Microsoft could be corrupting the system? Is Microsoft forcing the issue of transitioning to 11 and Outlook?"

The short answer is yes … and no. This is all just my opinion, not anything official.

OK. The real answer is that Microsoft has ended support for Windows 10, so those systems are not really given much (if any) consideration when new security features are rolled out.

Microsoft is constantly updating its mail security to try to keep one step ahead of the hackers. If you're using an unsupported version of the operating system and an unsupported browser or an older version of a mail app to check your mail, it may all work great … until it doesn't.

You won't get any warning. No window will pop up to advise you to update to Windows 11 or to the newest version of the Edge browser or the Outlook mail app. Things will just stop working.

For a while, you may be able to work around it by uninstalling and reinstalling or using a different browser, but eventually, you're going to run into a problem that you can't work around. This will likely be because of a change in something at Microsoft's end that your older hardware and software isn't equipped to handle.

The online community is a great place to ask questions. There are Microsoft message boards and subreddits where you can toss out your questions and ask for assistance. You'll find some helpful people who will try to get you back up and running, but eventually you'll run into a problem that will stump you, and that's when you'll need to update. Start saving your money.

Here's a tip. If you are having problems on the computer, try using your phone. Chances are your phone has a more recent operating system and the problems facing your aging PC will likely not be an issue on your phone.

Jim Rossman is a tech columnist for Tribune News Service. He may be reached at jrossmantechadviser@gmail.com.

Travel South Dakota / TNS

A lone bison roams the sweeping grasslands of Badlands National Park in South Dakota, a living relic of the vast herds that once thundered across the Great Plains. Bison are enduring symbols of the American frontier.

Our *Wild West* journey

By MARY ANN ANDERSON
Tribune News Service (TNS)

The open road called, and I answered. On a cool November morning, my husband and I climbed aboard a regional jet in Brunswick, a small city that anchors Georgia's light-splashed Golden Isles, bound for Atlanta for a change of planes, and then on to Spokane, Washington. We rented a car at the airport, and then, just like that, began driving eastbound and down back to Georgia on a cross-country journey across the very same terrain we had just flown.

My dream since I was a kid has always been to drive coast-to-coast but life happens. In less than a year's time I lost my beloved brother to complications from a two-decade battle with transverse myelitis, my two 19-year-old brother and sister cats, and my sanity from taking a direct hit from Hurricane Helene, the storm that essentially flattened our town with Category 2 winds. My world had shifted to a place where nothing quite fit anymore, and I couldn't see very far down the road.

In a moment of clarity, one of now or never, with no funerals to attend or sick folks or elderly cats to watch over, I chose to finally chase the sunrise. Come hell or high water, I was going to achieve my teenage dream of driving across the country. I would find out just how far down the road I could go to for a cathartic getaway filled with adventures, open roads, big skies, different cultures and new perspectives.

When I learned to drive at 14 years old, I instantly became a road warrior and love the sounds that come with it. Other road warriors know it: the unending white noise of motion, the whistling of the wind with the windows down, the rhythmic purring of tire rubber on pavement and the deep rumbling of other vehicles passing by. My inner child could hardly wait for the epic journey.

Since Roy and I had been to Seattle and Washington State before, we chose Spokane as our starting point. I bought a big paper atlas – there would be no GPS on the trip – and marked our seven-day sojourn state by state, town by town, highway by highway, hotel by hotel.

After our first overnight in Coeur d'Alene in scenic, idyllic Idaho, still full of bursts of fall color in vibrant yellows and reds, we hit the Montana state line on a gray, rainy morning. We oohed and aahed at the incredible forested mountains of the Bitterroot Range, now swathed in mist, and marveled at the pine forests that no matter how spectacular, just can't compete with Georgia's statuesque pines.

For unending miles, we followed Interstate 90 and the Clark Fork River, its clear water sparkling even under cloudy skies. Somewhere along the way, in the ranching community of Drummond, Montana, population maybe 350, we stopped at Parker's Restaurant for the most memorable meal of the trip.

Our server was incredibly enthusiastic and friendly, and the diner had a fun, cozy atmosphere. The restaurant offers, last I checked, some 135 unique burger

Montana Department of Commerce / TNS

Kayaking the Clark Fork River near Missoula, Glacier Country.

variations, featuring ingredients like crab, Spam, pineapple, Fritos, omelets, and even spinach. I opted for a simple cheeseburger, but it was so good that I couldn't help but inhale it and wonder aloud how Montana gets its beef so tasty.

From Bozeman to Billings, we climbed and then descended the Continental Divide and left the jagged Rockies behind as the landscape unfurled into the Great Plains. The rain had fled, and now the sky was enormous, a canvas of scattered light and a blue so vivid that it seemed more dream than reality. As we turned off the interstate onto ribbons of winding back roads, the magic of Big Sky Country unfolded before us. The earth and sky blurred into one seamless expanse, their edges softening until it was impossible to tell where the golden plains ended and the endless blue began.

From Montana, we crossed briefly into North Dakota, and then zipped to the South Dakota small town of Sturgis, with its population of about 7,000 that somehow explodes every August to upwards of 700,000 during the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. Driving through, it is unbelievable how so many people and their motorcycles could even cram and fold into such a diminutive place.

In nearby Rapid City, we stopped to overnight and have dinner with Cal and Rebecca, my nephew who is stationed there in the Air Force and his wife, and their handsome, sweet son, Owen. It wasn't a random or accidental visit, as I planned it that way, and we could have taken lots of roads elsewhere in South Dakota, but I'm pretty sure it would have been a sin to not visit family when you're that close.

From Rapid City, we passed through the otherworldly terrain of the Badlands, a jumble of buttes, pinnacles, and spires striated in warm, rusty shades of red, brown, tan, and pink. It is stunning in its desolateness, a magical and awe-inspiring sample of Mother Nature's hand, and I couldn't help but wonder how many pioneers, settlers, and cowboys rode into those canyons

Visit Southwest Montana / TNS

At Parker'ss Restaurant in Drummond, diners can order 135 varieties of the burger, including the Rodeo with crispy onion rings, cheddar cheese and a hearty, smoky barbecue sauce. Other burgers include the Elvis with peanut butter, bacon and banana, the Leaning Tower of Cheeza with triple cheese or the Way South of the Border with the hottest sauce that Parker's could find.

and ridges, only to vanish into the land's silent, timeless embrace.

We drove south, stopping to stand in the crisp November wind at Wounded Knee, where we read the historical marker describing the heartbreaking events of 1890 when the U.S. Army's attempt to disarm the Lakota Sioux led to a devastating confrontation, claiming hundreds of lives. I shivered in the swirling wind, a mix of solemnity, reverence and grief for the lives lost and the resilience of the Lakota people.

Down through Nebraska's mesmerizing, wind-sculpted ocean of sandhills we moved on. Just weeks before our trip, we had rewatched "Lonesome Dove," the original cowboy series with Robert Duvall and Tommy Lee Jones, so we made Ogallala, a once rough-and-tumble cowboy town mentioned myriad times in the show, a must-see in western Nebraska.

Ogallala stands as a sentinel on the wide-open high plains and was once the end of the trail for the western cattle drives. After lunch at the Front Street Steakhouse in the old western part of town, we also visited Boot Hill, a frontier-era cemetery sitting atop a rise and overlooking the South Platte River and where legend holds that cowboys were buried with their boots on.

The landscape stretched endlessly from Ogallala through Kansas to the Oklahoma border, a vast expanse of tabletop-flat prairie rising gently to an average elevation of 2,000 feet. Crossing the state line, I celebrated a personal milestone of having visited all fifty states, for as a farm girl raised on the no-money side of life, it was a dream that once seemed an impossibility.

In Oklahoma City, we finally turned the rental car from southward to eastward toward Georgia and home. Over the years, we have traveled to Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi and Alabama extensively, so we didn't really tarry long in any of those states.

Along the seven-day, 3,000-mile journey, traveling about half of the time on back roads and the other half on interstates, we saw a thrilling and incredible menagerie of wildlife: bald eagles, elk, coyote, turkey, bison, a lone wolf, pronghorn and herds of mule and white-tail deer. We talked to some wonderful folks along the way, and near Pine Ridge in South Dakota we heard Lakota spoken for the first time ever.

We had a safe journey, though not without two near-misses, saved each time, I'm convinced, by the grace of Miss Daisy, my guardian angel.

The first came in Montana, when an 18-wheeler pulled out of a side road and planted itself directly in our path. With Miss Daisy obviously at the wheel and both my feet smashing the brake pedal to the metal, I swerved like a maniac into the opposite lane where there was, thankfully, no incoming traffic. Somehow we missed the massive truck entirely, shaken but sound.

The second hairbreadth escape was in Kansas right at sunset. A whitetail buck, big and fully antlered, leaped out of nowhere and landed in front of the car, his muzzle just one second from smashing the front grill. Then, at the last possible instant before impact, he reared back and stood straight up on his two hind legs, and then in one lightning-fast movement pirouetted a full 180 degrees, as graceful as a ballerina, before leaping back into the field from where he had come. I'm certain Miss Daisy grabbed that deer by the scruff of the neck and hurled it back into the field.

Our further-flung road trip was certainly one of adventure, of dodging trucks, outsmarting deer and having a guardian angel named Miss Daisy. My inner road warrior had sprung back to life, ready to chase the next sunrise, the next cheeseburger and the next highway with promises of more unforgettable memories.

Mary Ann Anderson is a writer living in Hazlehurst, Georgia.

TRAVEL TIPS

Dreamstime / TNS

With tickets to popular Western European destinations as much as 20 percent higher this summer, domestic travel in the United States is surging. Travelers are increasingly opting to explore nearby destinations to save money. What's more, they're building domestic trips around favorite active hobbies, according to a new summer trends report from Airbnb.

Adult 'playcations' emerge as top trend

By MIA TAYLOR
TravelPulse (TNS)

As summer 2026 gets underway, the primary theme dominating the narrative thus far has been the impact of soaring airline ticket prices and how that development is shaping travel plans and decisions.

With tickets to popular Western European destinations as much as 20 percent higher this summer, domestic travel in the United States is surging. Travelers are increasingly opting to explore nearby destinations to save money. What's more, they're building domestic trips around favorite active hobbies, according to a new summer trends report from Airbnb.

Those are just a few of the developments revealed by the Airbnb report. Here are some of the additional travel styles and trends on tap for summer 2026.

Short-haul adult 'playcations'

Whether it's an early-morning tee time or catching the perfect wave, adults are planning "playcations" around the activities they love most, putting golf towns, surf breaks, and lakefront escapes on the map, according to Airbnb. As adults pursue of these play-themed getaways, a few key U.S. destinations are trending.

When it comes to surfing, it seems North Carolina is dominating the field with Holden Beach, Kill Devil Hills, and Nags Head the top trending locations.

"Holden Beach in North Carolina is a barrier island break that delivers mellow surfing conditions and a laid back vibe, while Nags Head boasts a deep local culture as one of the East Coast's oldest surf towns," says the Airbnb report. "Kill Devil Hills rounds it out with steady swells and a classic Outer Banks surf scene."

Among adults who love nothing better than a golf getaway, the top choices this summer are Ann Arbor, Michigan; Cheyenne, Wyoming; and Victor, Idaho.

"This summer, golfers are flocking to hidden gem courses across the Midwest and Rocky Mountains regions," the report explains.

Ann Arbor is an under-the-radar golf destination with well-regarded public and private courses, according to Airbnb, while Cheyenne and Victor have standout backdrops from high-plain vistas to the sweeping peaks of Teton Valley.

If sailing is your idea of a perfect summer activity, consider these trending locations: Saugatuck, Michigan; Chelan, Washington; Osage Beach, Missouri.

"In the Midwest, waterfront living thrives – from Saugatuck, with calm inland waterways and a charming marina culture, to Osage Beach, with miles of shoreline and lively waterfront dining," the Airbnb report explains.

Further west, Chelan winds 50 miles through a glacier-carved valley surrounded by Pacific Northwest landscapes and crystal-clear waters.

Budget-friendly rural retreats and escapes

Since President Donald Trump took office and the American-Israeli attack on Iran, the cost of living has skyrocketed for average Americans. In April, the U.S. annual consumer inflation index posted the largest gain in three years. Everything from energy prices to the cost of food and airfare has surged.

While some relief may be on the way with regard to international airfare, Americans for now are focused on short-haul escapes to cut costs: One-third of people are opting to stay closer to home this summer, says Airbnb.

The good news, according to the home-sharing platform, is that there are plenty of "hidden gem" destinations across the country that deliver similar character, natural beauty, and experiences as popular summer spots, but for a fraction of the price.

Some of the alternative locations to consider include: Bellingham, Washington; Eastport, Maine; Marfa, Texas; Westfield, New York; Pinedale, Wyoming; Hot Springs, South Dakota; Cloudcroft, New Mexico; Salmon, Idaho; Paonia, Colorado; Blanding, Utah.

Gen Z turns to 2016 Millennials' most loved destinations

Fueled by a wave of nostalgia travel, Gen Z explorers are romanticizing the past and bringing the destinations that defined 2016 back into the spotlight – with searches for those destinations up over 20 percent.

Rather than heading to the obvious, buzzy locales, they're uncovering lesser-known pockets within them, says Airbnb.Some of the trending international locations that are part of this development include: Surat Thani, Thailand; Folegandros, Greece; Lefkada, Greece; Ubatuba, Brazil; Fortaleza, Brazil; Zaragoza, Spain; Santander, Spain.

Urban getaways that put wellness first

By LESLIE K. HUGHES
TravelPulse (TNS)

There's something ironic about the classic city trip. You plan to have an experience, and you come home needing to recover from it. The noise, the pace, the stimulation – it adds up. But a growing number of travelers are pushing back against that idea, and the hospitality world is listening. Across major global cities, a new kind of urban escape is emerging. And it does not ask you to leave the city to find peace, but it allows you to find it right in the middle of everything.

From London to Los Angeles, Chicago to Brisbane, hotels and wellness destinations are no longer treating the spa as just an amenity. They're treating it as the whole point. Here's where to go to make the city a retreat.

New York City

The Waldorf Astoria New York

The newly restored Waldorf Astoria New York has always meant something, but its 2025 reopening added a new dimension to that legacy: The Guerlain Wellness Spa. This spa is Guerlain's largest in the world at 22,000 square feet, and it's the kind of destination that makes you rethink what a city hotel can offer. The treatments are meticulous, the technology is forward-thinking, and the whole thing takes place at one of Manhattan's most storied addresses, adding a layer of glamour that no spa in the countryside can replicate.

The signature "Like Clockwork" experience is a standout. It's a mind-release ritual built around vibroacoustic frequencies delivered through a warm quartz sand bed, designed to slow the mind to a pace that Midtown Manhattan usually makes impossible.

Dreamstime / TNS

The newly restored Waldorf Astoria New York has always meant something, but its 2025 reopening added a new dimension to that legacy: The Guerlain Wellness Spa.

Los Angeles

Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills

No city has made wellness a way of life quite like Los Angeles. But even by L.A. standards, the Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills has raised the bar significantly. The hotel's dedicated wellness floors blur the line between hotel stay and health program. They're stocked with circadian-aligned lighting, advanced air and water purification, and in-room recovery tools like infrared PEMF mats and compression boots.

The Vitality Experts Program, developed in partnership with Immortelle Integrative Health, offers everything from genomic analysis to IV therapy, as well as a Flight Check recovery protocol designed specifically for frequent travelers. It's the kind of offering that used to require a week at a destination spa. Here, it happens between meetings.

1 Hotel West Hollywood

A few miles west on the Sunset Strip, 1 Hotel West Hollywood takes a more nature-forward approach to the same idea. The Bamford Wellness Spa anchors the experience, while FACEGYM and an in-house Mind & Movement program round out a wellness ecosystem that extends well beyond the property's walls. Remedy Place and some of the city's best boutique fitness studios are steps away.

The hotel manages a rare trick: it puts you at the center of one of L.A.'s most electric corridors while making you feel genuinely removed from it.

London

Six Senses London

Opened in March 2026 with the reimagined Whiteley building near Hyde Park, Six Senses London may be one of the most anticipated urban wellness openings of the year. The brand built its reputation on remote island retreats and Himalayan hideaways, so the question has been whether that successful philosophy could translate to a global capital. The answer? Yes.

The 25,000-square-foot spa is organized around preventive health and recovery, with a longevity clinic, Alchemy Bar, and dedicated movement studios at its core. Biophilic design is integrated into every space, and Six Senses Place (the brand's first private members' club) adds a social dimension that's less about exclusivity and more about connection. It's the brand's Urban Awakening vision brought to life: the idea that a city shouldn't deplete you. It should restore you.

Rome

ROMEO Roma

Rome is one of the world's greatest sensory experiences. But ROMEO Roma makes a compelling case that the Eternal City can also be a restorative one. The property's LA SPA Sisley Paris spans 15,000 square feet and delivers the full suite: hammam, gravitational tub, salt wall, and Technogym-equipped fitness center, all built around Sisley's Phyto-Aromatiques philosophy of plant-based sensory wellness.

The detail that lingers longest is the pool: an indoor-outdoor glass-bottom design suspended above preserved archaeological ruins. You're floating above ancient Rome while your cortisol levels drop. Talk about urban wellness travel at its finest.

Chicago

The Langham, Chicago

Nestled alongside the Chicago River, The Langham, Chicago's Chuan Spa offers something rare in the American wellness landscape: a treatment philosophy rooted in Traditional Chinese Medicine. And it's applied with the luxury you'd expect from a five-star property.

The Five Elements framework – wood, fire, earth, metal, water – guides a menu of deeply personalized treatments, from the Qi Beauty Gold Micro Magnet Facial (a non-invasive alternative to injectables) to the two-hour Wu Xing journey that combines acupressure, bamboo massage, and full-body mud wrap. Add a Himalayan salt sauna, a 67-foot indoor pool, and herbal steam rooms to the pre- and post-treatment experience, and you have one of the most complete urban spa days in any American city.

Brisbane

The Calile Hotel

Named the Best Hotel in Oceania in 2024, The Calile Hotel operates on the idea that a city stay should feel restful. The Kailo Medispa, with its infrared sauna and wellness pods, brings destination-spa legitimacy to a property that also happens to be at the center of Brisbane's social scene.

And it helps that Brisbane is made for it. The city wakes earlier than anywhere else in Australia, and its culture has organized itself accordingly: waterfront runs, dawn markets, sunrise yoga, morning laps in the hotel pool.

Each of these destinations offers a unique urban wellness experience, but one thing connects them all: the notion that wellness is no longer the antidote to a city trip. It's the reason to take one.